

Paris asks Bern to extradite Iranian

PARIS (R) — France formally asked Swiss officials on Tuesday to extradite an Iranian held in connection with the murder of former Iranian prime minister Shapour Bakhtiar in Paris last August. Foreign ministry spokesman Daniel Bernard said the request to hand over Zeyal Sarhadi, 25, was sent to officials in Bern by diplomatic bag and was expected to arrive there on Tuesday afternoon. Mr. Sarhadi was arrested last week on an Interpol warrant as he left Iran's embassy in Bern. Switzerland says he does not have diplomatic immunity. A French investigating magistrate believes Mr. Sarhadi helped Mr. Bakhtiar's killers escape after stabbing him and his secretary to death on Aug. 6 at Mr. Bakhtiar's Paris home. The magistrate set the extradition proceedings in motion last week. Iran has protested against the arrest, sparking a diplomatic row with Switzerland, which closed its embassy in Tehran after Iranian airport guards briefly confiscated the diplomatic passport of one of the Swiss staff (see page 2). The closure broke contact between Iran and the United States because Switzerland has represented Washington's interests in Tehran since 1979.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

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4 journalists killed in 1991

RUSSELS (R) — Two journalists were killed on Monday, adding to 84 the number of journalists killed this year on assignment or because of their work, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) said Tuesday. The Brussels-based IFJ, reporting a death toll of 83 on Monday, said it was already a highest annual toll on record. The latest deaths were in Colombia, where nine journalists are now being killed this year, and in Yugoslavia, taking the toll among text and photo journalists there to 22. But the IFJ said in a statement that Egyptian journalist Mahmoud Abdul Azeen Ahmad Megahed reported missing in Iraq since January 1991 and originally included among the dead had returned to Egypt. The 84 killings had taken place in 23 countries, it said.

Big drug haul in southeast Iran

ICOSIA (AP) — Police in southeastern Iran seized about 30 kilo of drugs in December, including heroin, opium, and hashish, the Islamic Republic news Agency reported Tuesday. The agency quoted a press release from the anti-drug campaign centre in Sistan-alushian province as adding that the drug sweep resulted in 54 arrests on charges of drug trafficking or other "gross felonies." Among other contraband seized were 56 pornographic videotapes, 50,000 pornographic pictures and "countless" bottles of liquor, the centre said. These items are illegal in Iran. The province, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, straddles a major smuggling route.

Bulgaria pledges to respect Muslim rights

ICOSIA (AP) — Bulgarian Foreign Minister Stoyan Ganev on Tuesday told his Iranian counterpart that his country respects the rights of its Muslim community. Tehran Radio reported. "The new government, which rejects foreign domination and influence, is giving consideration to basic human freedoms, respect for religious and, especially, respect for the rights of Bulgarian Muslims," the radio quoted Mr. Ganev as saying. Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati told him the fate of Bulgarian Muslims "is very important to us, as is the fate of Muslims in the rest of the world," the radio reported. Mr. Ganev arrived Tuesday on a one-day trip to Iran.

Canadian minister holds talks in Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Canadian Defence Minister Marcel Masse held talks in Kuwait Tuesday with his counterpart in the emirate and the Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah. No details were given of Mr. Masse's talks with the Emir and Kuwaiti Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah. Officials said Mr. Masse, who arrived in Kuwait Monday night for a three-day visit, would visit the headquarters of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) during his stay.

Americans held by Iraq in 'good health'

BAGHDAD (R) — Two U.S. businessmen held in a Baghdad jail after being arrested on the Iraq-Kuwait border are in good health, a Polish diplomat said Tuesday. "They are well; they are safe," the official at the Polish embassy told Reuters. The diplomat said he could not give further details until the U.S. State Department had been contacted about the case. A State Department spokesman said in Washington Monday the two men, whom he would not identify, were arrested on Dec. 6. The spokesman said Baghdad planned to try the two men on charges of illegal arrival and penetration of Iraqi territory. Iraq has not commented on the case.

Palestinians still set to leave Kuwait despite visa respite

KUWAIT (R) — Palestinians say they are relieved that Kuwait has extended their permits by five months to stay in what for some is the only home they have ever known.

But many believe this is no more than a breathing space and that the bitter legacy of the Gulf war, when the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) supported Iraq, means most will eventually have to leave.

"We have been living through hell not knowing what will happen to us," a woman bookshop assistant told Reuters on Tuesday. "At least now we have time to sort things out."

The Kuwaiti government said on Sunday an end-of-December deadline for tens of thousands of non-Kuwaitis to apply for renewing residence permits would be extended to the end of May.

Many Palestinians had feared that the government would refuse to give them permits and they would have to leave.

"Now we can relax and collect our thoughts," a 59-year-old Palestinian father of 10 said. "We'll work on two levels: To satisfy the requirements of the visa and to prepare our travelling

plans to Jordan.

"If they let us stay, fine, if not, fine, we'll leave."

After Kuwait's liberation from seven months of Iraqi occupation last February, thousands of Palestinians and Jordanians, most of Palestinian origin, lost their jobs.

Kuwait's Palestinian community has dwindled to about 50,000 from 400,000 before the invasion. Some fled during the invasion. Many left after losing their jobs.

A Palestinian woman, who like the others declined to be named for fear of reprisals, said she and her brother had sold their shop after 38 years in Kuwait and were leaving to Jordan on Wednesday.

"This is no place for us," she said. "The Palestinian community here has been shattered, most of my friends have left and we are now scattered across the world."

Official sources said earlier Kuwait would approve giving residence visas to about 35,000 Palestinians and Jordanians who remained in the emirate during the Iraqi invasion and did not collaborate with the occupiers.

Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Salem Al Sabah said in an interview published on

Tuesday that security was currently the main concern in Kuwait.

He said the government was studying plans on the future population structure in Kuwait to determine how many Arabs and foreigners it would allow to stay.

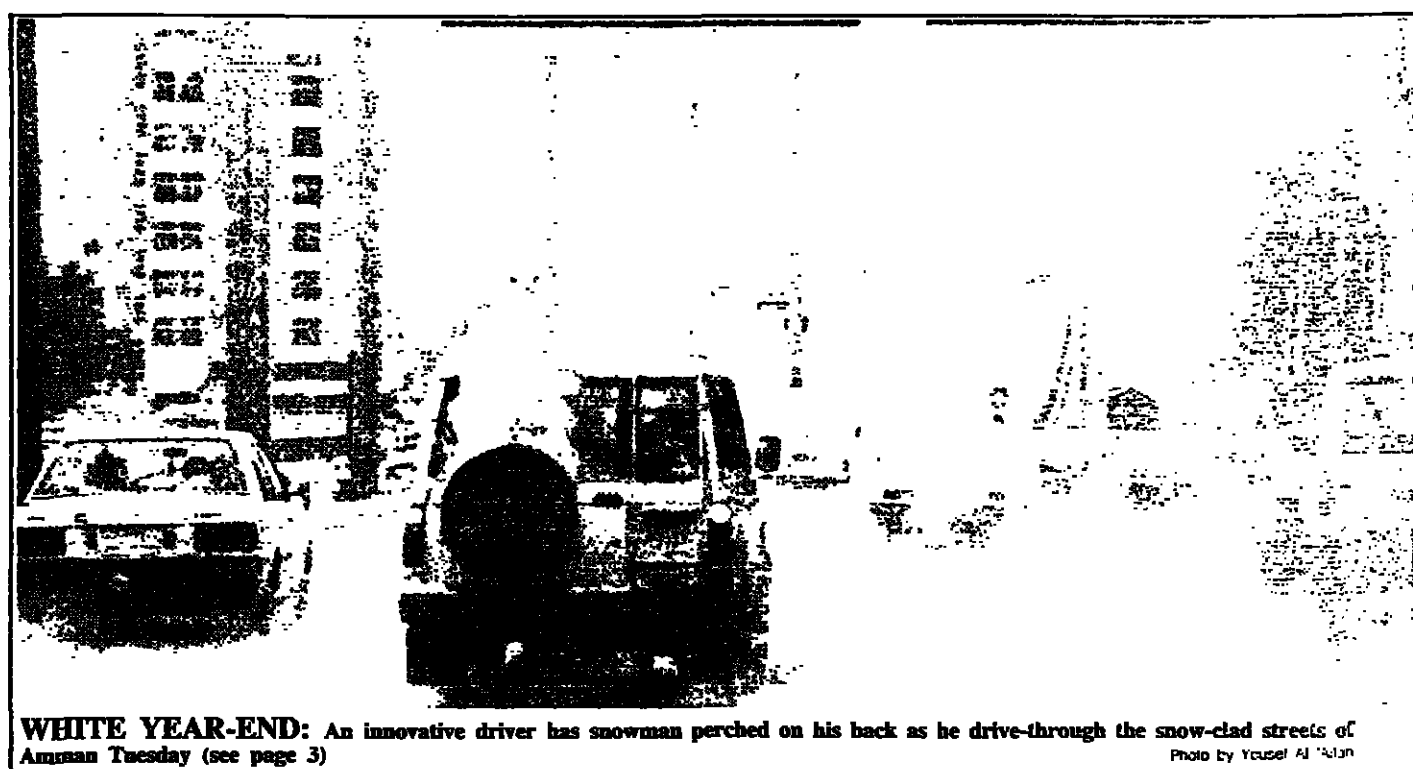
Hundreds of Palestinians and Jordanians were arrested this month in a security clampdown before and during a Gulf Arab summit in Kuwait City.

Palestinians say many were given exit visas and had to leave the country, some were freed and others remained in detention.

A Palestinian man in his 70s said his son was arrested at a checkpoint. He was taken to a police station and has been held there ever since without charge.

"Do you want me to believe that the extension of the applications is because they want us to stay?" he asked. "They are only giving us time to end our interests here and finish our packing."

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, seeking jobs and a second home, flocked to the oil-rich emirate after Israel was set up in 1948 and following the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967.



WHITE YEAR-END: An innovative driver has snowman perched on his back as he drive-through the snow-clad streets of Amman Tuesday (see page 3)

Somali ceasefire appears to hold

NAIROBI (Agencies) — Quite hung over Somalia's battle-torn capital Mogadishu Tuesday as a ceasefire between clan factions appeared to be holding after six weeks of vicious fighting, relief officials said.

"It's still too early to say, but it was quiet overnight and the ceasefire seems to be holding," said a Nairobi-based United Nations official in contact with the city.

After several failed attempts in the past few days, neutral clan leaders apparently persuaded rival warlords Mohammad Farah Aided and Ali Mahdi Mohammad to stop mortar bombardments and gunbattles at dusk on Monday. Nairobi-based aid workers said.

They said leaders of the Hawiye clan-based United Somali Congress (USC), to which Mr. Ali Mahdi and Gen. Aided both belong, through their membership of the same ethnic clan, were meeting in Mogadishu's old parliament building.

The terms of the ceasefire were unclear and relief workers were sceptical whether the uneasy peace could last for long.

"Their ammunition is not running out, why should they stop fighting?" said one aid worker.

The Horn of Africa nation was first plunged into anarchy last January, when Hawiye guerrillas ousted dictator Mohammad Siad Barre and turned to bloody family feuding.

Rough estimates for the number killed and wounded in the capital since the current round of fighting started on Nov. 17 run up to 20,000, most of them civilians caught in crossfire.

Fighting between rival factions also erupted last week in the port of Kisumu, 450 kilometres south of Mogadishu, aid workers said.

Omar Cheiss, a warlord figure leading a rebel group which fought to topple Mr. Siad Barre, is regarded as a long-term ally of Gen. Aided, was reported to have taken control of the port and killed one of the ousted president's top generals.

Mr. Siad Barre is still living in his homeland region of western Somalia, close to the Kenyan border, and the few people who have seen him report that he has been reduced to squalid conditions.

Another clash in the northern Red Sea port of Berbera also appeared to have ended, sources said.

Both sides in the Mogadishu conflict appeared to be trying to improve their positions in advance of a United Nations peace mission due in the city on Friday, said Peter Stocker, regional director of the International Committee of the Red Sea (ICRC).

U.N. General Secretary Javier Perez de Cuellar is sending James Jonah, his under-secretary for African affairs, to Mogadishu in an attempt to end the fighting. Mr. Jonah was to arrive in Nairobi on Thursday, then fly on to Mogadishu the next day.

Shamir battles for budget vote

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, racing against a deadline, lobbied Tuesday for parliamentary approval of the 1992 budget in a vote seen as a crucial test for his government.

The budget vote will be a pointer to the stability of Mr. Shamir's right-wing coalition government, which has to deal with more controversial issues in the future, mainly the peace process.

With 64 seats in the 120-member parliament, Mr. Shamir should theoretically have no problem. But four religious and two ultra-rightist coalition parties vowed to vote against the budget, and if they carry out their threat, it would be tantamount to the collapse of the coalition.

"It's like a motion of confidence... the conclusions are the same. We cannot imagine a situation in which members of the coalition don't vote for the budget," Shamir spokesman Yoram Ahimeir said in an interview. He hinted that failure of the

budget might force elections ahead of their November 1992 date.

Hours before the midnight (2200 GMT) deadline for starting the debate in parliament, Mr. Shamir was not assured of a majority for the 107 billion shekel (\$45.5 billion) budget.

The religious factions were feuding over how to distribute funds for religious schools and institutions. Right-wingers demanded more money for Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Parliament convened Tuesday to vote on preparatory legislation for the budget. Debate on the budget is open-ended but was to begin before midnight Tuesday to end with a vote, said parliament spokeswoman Sarah Yitzhaki.

Mr. Shamir headquartered himself in parliament for the day, and consulted with Finance Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and leaders of the coalition partners, Mr. Ahimeir said.

Mr. Ahimeir appeared confident the drama would end without the government falling. "It is a known ritual that repeats itself every year before confirmation of the budget," he said. "Small parties, religious and other, put their final demands on the table. We hope we will succeed."

He said Mr. Shamir would like the government to serve out its term. "But everyone can see what is happening around us. There is a possibility that there will be crises and that elections will be held earlier than scheduled," Mr. Ahimeir told Israel Radio. Mr. Mordechai said the deadlock seemed to be worsening. He singled out the fighting over the special allocations for the religious.

Last week Mr. Mordechai said that if the pressure groups managed to extract the money, he would have to "knock on the doors of the United States, and good Jews and good gentiles" to help foot the bill.

U.S. expects peace talks next week

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The Bush administration has expressed confidence that Arab-Israeli peace talks would be resumed next week. But officials said a specific date had not been nailed down.

"We are in touch with the parties regarding the details of the next round," said Mr. Richard Boucher, a State Department spokesman. "We don't have any announcements for you."

Israel is negotiating on three fronts with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and with representatives of Syria and Lebanon. The talks recessed here on Dec. 17 with an informal understanding they intended to resume the week of Jan. 6.

"I don't have any reason to doubt that," Mr. Boucher said Monday.

The negotiations apparently will be held in Washington again, which is a big climbdown for Israel. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir wanted to deal with the Arabs in Middle East as a way of

gaining symbolic recognition.

Mr. Boucher, asked what role the United States was taking, said: "The intention of the United States is to continue to work with the parties to see the talks take place."

The last round did not produce solid results. But behind the dispute appears to lurk an interest by both Israel and the Palestinians to reach an agreement.

Asked whether reports were true that Israel has asked the United States to postpone the talks with the Syrians and the Lebanese but not the Jordanians, Mr. Boucher said: "I don't know. I haven't seen that report. I know as far as what Israel thinks and what Israel wants, you'd have to check with the Israelis."

Asked whether it was still U.S. policy that the U.S. was happy to see progress on any front and did not necessarily tie one set of talks to the others, Mr. Boucher said: "I don't want to start commenting on a report I haven't seen or

to take the occasion of a report I haven't seen to reiterate what's standard U.S. policy. We've expressed ourselves before on the need for talks, on the importance of talks, and our desire to see people get together and get down to business. That remains the case."

"No free peace" — Egypt

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Tuesday Israel would not get peace for free and warned that Arabs would not continue to put up with what he called the Jewish state's intransigence in future negotiations.

He said ties between Egypt and Iran were "tenser" over Gulf security arrangements and hinted that Tehran should not meddle in Arab affairs.

"Israel cannot take anything for free," Mr. Musa said in a statement to parliament's foreign relations committee. "Israel must recognise the rights of the Arab parties and return land to its owners. This is a position we cannot withdraw."

Husseini fights an uphill battle

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — For Palestinian leader Faisal Husseini, it was a rough day on the campaign trail.

On Monday morning, Mr. Husseini came to debate the peace process in a hall in the occupied West Bank town of Tulkarem, and was silenced by Muslim militants who threw rocks and bottles and shouted, "Down with the traitors."

In the evening, on the campus of Tel Aviv University, he had to dodge Jewish militants with placards that read, "Death to Husseini the traitor."

"Peace is a battle," remarked the 51-year-old Husseini after emerging unscathed from both incidents.

The hardliners numbered only a few dozen on each side, but they represent the extremes of the debate that has torn both Israeli and Palestinian society since the U.S.-brokered peace process got under way.

Having played a key role in leading the Palestinians into the talks, Mr. Husseini is now conducting a hectic campaign of public appearances. In the West Bank, he must convince Palestinians that they have not been sold out. In Israel, he must prove to a suspicious electorate that his intentions are sincere.

Mr. Husseini was invited to Tel Aviv University by a leftist group, which invited about 1,000 Israelis mostly known to be sympathetic to the demand for a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

He urged Israelis "to come out of the ghetto, stop thinking the whole world is against you." He said a small Palestinian state could pose no military threat because it would "need every penny to rebuild itself."

With Mr. Husseini on the podium were fellow Palestinian Ziad Abu Ziad and two Israeli former generals — Tel Aviv Mayor Shlomo Lahat and Mordechai Gur, a former chief of staff.

The evening was suffused with ironies that demonstrate the subtle complexities of Middle East peacemaking. Mr. Lahat is firmly for Palestinian statehood. His party, the ruling Likud, is against it. Pro-Palestinian sentiment is strong in Mr. Gur's Labour Party, but Mr. Gur lines up with the party leadership in thinking that statehood is a terrible idea.

Mr. Abu Ziad, a bespectacled lawyer, described his people's painful journey away from the hope of eradicating Israel to accepting that it is here to stay.

"We lived in a dream," he said, speaking the perfect Hebrew he taught himself in order to reach out to Israelis.

But finally "we asked ourselves whether we could allow ourselves to go on living in the illusion that we could turn the clock back, or start dealing with reality."

Today, he said, "we have passed from the dream of all Palestine to the approach of a two-state solution — a state of Palestine alongside the state of Israel."

Mr. Husseini painted a vision of regional harmony in which Israel and its Arab neighbours could come together like Western Europe.

Mr. Lahat spoke eloquently in support of a Palestinian state, while Mr. Gur presented himself as the hard-nosed strategist, saying: "Nice words won't solve the problem. Nice words must be accompanied by the right actions."

He did not doubt Mr. Husseini's good intentions, but worried about other processes beyond Israel's control, such as the Islamic surge demonstrated by the Algerian election result, and the breakup of the Soviet Union which could add more Islamic republics to Israel's list of enemies.

S. Arabia expected to keep Iraqi oil pipeline closed

DUBAI (R) — Iraq, desperate for an alternative to Turkey as a route for oil exports, will not be allowed to reopen its pipeline through Saudi Arabia while Saddam Hussein remains in power, Gulf industry sources say.

Iraq has so far refused to accept United Nations terms for resuming limited oil sales. It says Turkey, designated as the sole point of export, has demanded exorbitant fees.

Baghdad said last week it had repaired its section of the 1.6 million barrels per day (bpd) capacity pipeline through Saudi Arabia, which ends at Saudi Red Sea port of Muajiz, and was ready to use it.

"Saudi Arabia will never allow Iraq to export oil through that pipeline as long as (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein remains in power," said one oil industry executive close to Saudi thinking.

Saudi Arabia closed the 1,500-km pipeline and the oil terminal after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and a subsequent U.N. trade embargo slapped on Baghdad.

Oil industry sources say there are still about 20 million barrels of Iraqi crude in the system, half in storage tanks at Muajiz and half in the pipeline which crosses the Arabian Peninsula.

The Gulf crisis also stopped Iraq's oil flowing through two other main outlets — the 1.6 million bpd capacity twin pipeline through Turkey to the Mediterranean and its export terminal in the northern Gulf at Mina Al Bakr.

The U.N. Security Council has given Baghdad permission to export some oil to buy food and medicine. Iraq says the scheme infringes its sovereignty and the \$1.6 billion export limit is too low for its needs.

Responding to Iraq's claim that it was demanding too much in

pipeline fees, Turkey said last week it could negotiate a deal.

Iraq said earlier this month that its Mina Al Bakr oil export terminal in the northern Gulf, damaged by allied forces during the war for the liberation of Kuwait, would be ready in the next two months.

Oil industry sources said Baghdad's announcement about its section of the Iraqi-Saudi pipeline, meant that it must have repaired a key pumping station hit by the allies.

Iraq currently produces around 450,000 bpd of oil for its domestic needs and a small amount for export to Jordan. Industry sources say it could push output up to 1.6 million bpd if exports are permitted.

Iraq produced around 3.2 million bpd before it invaded Kuwait. Some of its oil production and transport facilities suffered heavy damage during the war.

Another Gulf-based oil economist said Saudi Arabia might "amputate" its section of the pipeline and take over all the terminal and pumping facilities.

"Saudi Arabia might take over the whole thing on the grounds that Iraq never paid its construction costs and pipeline fees," he said, adding such a decision was political and could only be taken at a high level in Saudi Arabia.

The state-owned oil company Saudi Aramco operated the five pipeline pumping stations inside its own territory as well as the loading terminal at Muajiz. 50 kilometres south of Saudi Arabia's own Red Sea oil terminal at Yanbu.

Saudi Arabia first allowed Baghdad in 1983 to export crude oil through its own pipeline from the Gulf fields to the Red Sea. A special pipeline for Iraqi exports was completed in January last year at a cost of \$2.7 billion.

Former hostages lead honour roll

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II honoured Britain's former hostages in Lebanon with awards for their "courage and fortitude" Tuesday and bestowed knighthood upon actor-writer Dirk Bogarde.

The annual new year's honours list, like the queen's birthday honours list in June, awards titles, honours and medals to some 1,000 people in Britain and its former colonies. Although they are officially the monarch's honours, most names are selected by the government.

Soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf was made a dame, the woman's equivalent of knight-hood.

Pioneering heart surgeon Magdi Yacoub becomes a knight, as do Michael Checkland, director-general of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and Hugh Amessley, chief constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, Northern Ireland's police force.

Richard Eyre, director of London's Royal National Theatre, becomes a commander of the British Empire (CBE).

Obes, officers of the Order of British Empire, go to novelist and mystery writer Dorothy Dunnett, and to historical novelist Rosemary Sutcliffe.

Former hostages Terry Waite, John McCarthy, Jack Mann and Brian Keenan become commanders of the British Empire, cited "for courage and fortitude while held hostage in the Lebanon."

Mr. Keenan, who holds both Irish and British passports, was released in August 1990 after four years in captivity. His former cellmate, John McCarthy, was freed a year later after nearly 5½ years as a hostage.

Mr. Mann, kidnapped in May 1989, was freed Sept. 24 this year. News of the award for Britain's last-released hostage, Church of England envoy Terry Waite, came while he was vacationing with his family in the Bahamas.

Mr. Waite, released last month after nearly five years in captivity, issued a statement through the British high commission there that he was "pleased and honoured."

Mr. Bogarde, Britain's latest actor-knight, is also the author of five volumes of autobiography and three novels, and now writes book "Death in Venice," "The Spanish Gardener" and "Oh, What a Lovely War."

Sir David Wilson, governor of Hong Kong, was made a baron, one of five life peerages bestowed. Downing Street indicated Monday that Sir David would retire as governor before the end of 1992.

Veteran news cameraman Mohammad Amin, who lost an arm in an explosion while reporting with the BBC on last year's civil war in Ethiopia, was made a member of the British Empire.

Mr. Amin is back at work with an artificial arm and a specially adapted camera. "I never dreamed I would one day join this illustrious roll of honour. I just wish my father had lived to see the day," he said.

Along with public figures in sports, the arts and politics, the honours also include the less well-known. This year, for example, Elizabeth Pickard received the Royal Victoria Medal for her work as chief upholsterer at Buckingham Palace, and Fiona Jane Dalrymple was awarded the Order of the British Empire "for services to the pig industry in Scotland."

Tehran Times says Swiss embassy closure too hasty

NICOSIA (AP) — A leading Iranian newspaper Tuesday acknowledged the confiscation of a Swiss diplomat's passport at Tehran airport was a mistake, but said Switzerland reacted too hastily when it closed its embassy as a result.

The English-language Tehran Times said the Swiss were using the incident as a "smoke screen" to cover up what it called Switzerland's mistake in arresting an Iranian in connection with the murder of Iranian opposition figure Shapur Bakhtiar in Paris.

The embassy was closed Sunday after Christa Felder, a Swiss diplomat, was prevented from leaving the country. Her passport was confiscated for several hours, causing her to miss her flight.

The Swiss also have looked after U.S. interests in Iran since 1979, when Washington severed ties with Iran.

"It is quite obvious that the Mehrabad airport staff have committed a mistake which has to be looked into by the concerned authorities," the Tehran Times said in its editorial.

"But political observers believe that the closure of an embassy under such circumstances and in response to a mistake that could have taken place anywhere in the world is a hasty, unjustifiable and uncommon reaction."

The diplomatic squabble began Dec. 23 following the arrest of Zeyal Sarhadi, an Iranian suspected of assisting Mr. Bakhtiar's killers.

Mr. Bakhtiar, a former premier and strong critic of Iran's Muslim fundamentalist leaders, was assassinated at his home near Paris on Aug. 6.

Iran claims that Mr. Sarhadi, 25, is an employee of the Iranian embassy in Bern and is immune from arrest, but the Swiss say he entered Switzerland on a tourist visa in September and never registered as a diplomat or embassy employee.

Algerian women activists campaign against Islamists

ALGIERS (AP) — Women's rights activists are charging Muslim fundamentalists who won Algeria's first free parliamentary elections with planning to return the country to the dark ages.

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) hopes to impose a state guided by Koranic law. Many women fear they will be forced to wear veils and be denied jobs and education.

The Independent Association for the Triumph of Women's Rights, the country's largest such organisation, in a communique urged Algerians to block the FIS from taking power.

"Will the FIS voters, just 25 per cent of the electorate, be allowed to impose the Middle Ages on all of Algeria? The group asked. 'Will they be allowed to bury women alive?'"

The fundamentalist party won 188 seats outright in last Thursday's election for the 430-seat national people's assembly, just 28 short of a majority, according to final results released Monday by the Constitutional Council.

The National Liberation Front (FLN), which ruled Algeria as a one-party Marxist state for 29 years, took just 16. The liberal Front for Socialist Forces finished second with 25. Three were won by independents.

A run-off election will be held Jan. 16 for the 198 remaining seats, where there was no outright majority. Most contests will pit the FIS against the FLN.

The present parliament, composed entirely of the FLN, concluded its present session Monday. It seems the last time a purely FLN legislature gathers.

The women warned that a FIS-run parliament could provoke a civil conflict. They urged voters who abstained last week to turn out Jan. 16 and "block the road

to the FIS."

Only 58 per cent of Algeria's 13.3 million registered voters cast ballots in the first round. Many who abstained are believed to have been women, who are often controlled by their male relatives.

Losing parties have contested the results in about 50 seats, mostly charging the fundamentalists with irregularities.

Allegations include pressuring voters outside polling stations, filling in ballots for illiterate voters, and distributing consumer goods to voters in exchange for their support.

Algeria's Sunni Muslims are more moderate than the Shiites running Iran. Acting FIS leader Abdul Kader Hachani, considered a moderate, has said that Iranian-style people's courts will not be imposed, and that women will not be confined to their homes.

But hardliners contend that women take jobs away from men and spend their money on makeup.

Much of the party's popular support comes from poor, unemployed young men. About 75 per cent of Algeria's 25.7 million people are under 30, and unemployment stands at 23 per cent.

Mr. Hachani has moderated FIS demands for early presidential elections, saying President Chadli Benjedid should serve out the two years left on his term if he does not interfere with parliament.

Real political power is held by the president. Mr. Benjedid controls the army and is the only power that can launch reforms to the 1989 constitution guaranteeing political pluralism.

Mr. Benjedid has declared willingness to stay in office whether the fundamentalists control parliament or not.

Iran daily warns Turkey

TEHRAN (R) — A Tehran daily has said instability in former Soviet republics could make Iranian borders insecure and warned Turkey not to whip up nationalist sentiment in the newly-independent countries.

Expressing the first Iranian alarm about the political fallout from the Soviet Union's collapse, the Tehran Times said "foreign hands" were at work to stir trouble among Iran's Azeri and Turkmen minorities.

Anti-Western Iran and NATO-member Turkey, each with their separate religious and ethnic ties with former Soviet republics, are vying for influence in the region.

"The unstable condition in (the former Soviet) republics could be a serious cause of insecurity along the 2,200-kilometre border Iran shares with those countries," the pro-government paper said.

"Already foreign hands can be felt to be at work in those republics, especially in Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, with the ultimate objective of brewing discord among Iranian Azeris and Turkmen by instigating ethnic and nationalistic sentiments."

"Apparently Washington expects Turkey to play a dominant role in setting in motion the new nationalistic movements."

Iran is Shiite Muslim, like most Azeris, while Turks are mostly Sunni, as are the majority of the people in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The six republics have a combined population of 60 million.

Iran shares a border with Turkmenistan in the northeast and Azerbaijan and Christian-dominated Armenia in the northwest.

Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel said this month that government and business should act as "elder brother" for the newly-independent republics.

In Turkey's case, the former Soviet republics' ties are with its majority population, but in the case of Iran, the strongest link is with its 10 million Azeris.

Some 1,000 people have been killed since 1988 in a dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the Armenian-populated enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan.

The Iranian news agency IRNA quoted the television station in Nakhichevan — a strip of Azerbaijan hemmed in by Iran, Armenia and Turkey — as reporting that the area suffered from acute shortages because of a food and fuel blockade by Armenia.

It said the television showed watchtowers and border fences being stripped down by Azeris along the Iranian frontier.

Thousands of Soviet Azeris, seeking to meet relatives in Iranian Azerbaijan, crossed illegally into Iran in early 1990 before Tehran and Moscow eased cross-border travel.

Russia's tears took control of much of the region after defeating Persia in two wars early in the 19th century.

In 1945 a left-wing republic was set up in Iranian Azerbaijan under the shadow of the Soviet army which refused to withdraw like other allied forces at the end of World War II.

It lasted a year, collapsing when the late Shah's troops moved in after the Soviet army finally pulled out.

Iran's Islamic government has had no serious trouble with its Azeris since the 1979 revolution.

There was minimal protest in parliament and press when an Iranian deputy made a speech in Azeri in parliament in January 1990 after Moscow's military intervention in Baku touched off a wave of pro-Azeri sentiment in Iran.

Leftist groups active among the much smaller Turkmen minority were suppressed in 1980.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

PLO urges protection of Palestinians

TUNIS (AP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) asked the U.N. Security Council Monday to protect Palestinians from Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Spokesman Ahmad Abdul Rahman said that the United Nations had been asked to intervene following alleged acts of vandalism by Jewish settlers on the Palestinian village Anabta. The settlers, supported by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, "want to establish de facto authority" in the occupied territories, Mr. Abdul Rahman said. Mr. Abdul Rahman accused the settlers of trying to sabotage the Middle East peace talks orchestrated by the United States, and urged Washington to develop a harder line with Israel.

King Fahd promises assembly

NICOSIA (R) — Saudi Arabia's King Fahd has promised to establish the kingdom's first representative assembly within two months. He briefed the Saudi cabinet Monday of progress made in revising the way Saudi Arabia is governed and establishing a consultative (shura) council, the official Saudi Press Agency reported. He said the new rules would be published in the month of Shaaban, which starts about Feb. 3. King Fahd pledged at the height of the Gulf crisis last year that he would introduce a shura council to establish an element of popular participation in government. The council's functions are widely expected to be purely advisory. Western diplomats in the Gulf say it is unlikely to have legislative powers although some of its members may be elected. But it will be a major innovation for Saudi Arabia where the Al Saud family has ruled absolutely since King Fahd's father, the late King Abdul Aziz, established the kingdom in 1932. There are mainly-appointed consultative councils in other Gulf Arab states such as Oman. The government of Kuwait, the only Gulf state that allowed a Western-style parliament until the mid-1980s, has promised elections for a new legislative assembly next October.

Three hurt by bombs in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — A bomb in an Ankara rubbish bin and another planted in an Istanbul hotel car park wounded three people; the Anatolian news agency reported Tuesday. It said two people were slightly hurt when a bomb exploded underneath a car during the night in the car park of a hotel, Swissotel the Bosphorus, in Istanbul's Dolmabahce district. A previously unknown left-wing group calling itself the People's Liberation Force claimed responsibility for the attack in a telephone call to Anatolian's Istanbul office. In Ankara, a passer-by was seriously wounded by a bomb which went off in a rubbish bin outside the offices of the mass-circulated Hurriyet newspaper. It smashed all the building's ground-floor windows, but no-one inside was hurt. Another previously unheard-of group, the Islamic Resistance Organisation, claimed responsibility for the attack in a call to the Ankara office of the liberal Milliyet newspaper.

Mubarak meets New York cardinal

CAIRO (AP) — New York Cardinal John J. O'Connor, stirring a Middle East humanitarian tour, met Tuesday with President Hosni Mubarak. Cardinal O'Connor told reporters afterwards he found Mr. Mubarak "very optimistic and very confident" about the outcome of current Middle East peace efforts. But he said his talks with the Egyptian leader were concerned primarily with the activities of the organisation Cardinal O'Connor heads, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association. "We have various humanitarian activities — schools, hospitals, orphanages and so on," Cardinal O'Connor said. The cardinal also will visit Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria during his tour, his fourth since 1986, the association's president. Cardinal O'Connor arrived Monday from Rome, where he had an audience with Pope John Paul II.

Briton fined for flying over Rabat palace

RABAT (R) — A Moroccan court fined a British pilot who flew low over one of King Hassan's palaces after losing his bearings in cloud, diplomats said Tuesday. Jonathan Barrett was ordered to pay 2,000 dirhams (\$250) for flying his light plane in a prohibited zone. He flew over the king's seaside palace at Skhirat, 40 km from Rabat after being refused permission to land at Casablanca because of bad weather. He was told to fly back to Rabat but lost his way. When he came out of dense cloud he found himself over the palace. Diplomats said they had no other details about Mr. Barrett or his plane. He was questioned by security forces on landing at Rabat but was not detained pending his court appearance.

Morocco frees three French brothers

RABAT (R) — The Moroccan authorities released three French brothers Monday jailed without trial since 1973 for allegedly helping military prisoners to escape, lawyers said. The brothers Rene Midhat, Ali Auguste and Hajzette Jacques Bourquet were freed after spending 18 years in a secret detention centre at Tazmamart, in a remote part of the Atlas Mountains. The Bourquet brothers, who have dual French and Moroccan nationality, were allegedly detained on suspicion of helping military prisoners to escape. Officials did not acknowledge they were detained. Relatives, including two sisters and another brother, were unable to obtain any news of their whereabouts. A lawyer who escorted the men out of prison said they had gone to stay with one of their sisters who lives in Casablanca. The Tazmamart jail was demolished in September and the inmates moved to other detention centres.

Reporter appointed head of Israeli army radio

TEL AVIV (R) — Defence Minister Moshe Arens and the army's chief of staff appointed veteran military correspondent Moshe Shlonsky commander of armed forces radio, Israel Radio said Monday. Chief of Staff Ehud Barak and Mr. Arens turned over Mr. Shlonsky following the resignation this weekend of the former commander after he criticised them in a newspaper interview. Israel Radio said, Reservist Amos Gilboa was in the post for less than a week. Mr. Shlonsky, 43, has covered military affairs for Israel television for nearly a decade and had been slated to replace its correspondent in Germany, Israel Radio said.

U.N.: 1980-88 war cost Iran \$92 b in damages

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar estimated Iraq inflicted \$97.2 billion in civilian damages to Iran during their 1980-88 war, according to a report obtained by Reuters Tuesday.

However, the report stopped short of recommending Iraq pay reparations and instead suggested the United Nations convene a "round table" to get international reconstruction aid for Iran. The 119-page report, distributed to Security Council members, was prepared by a former U.N. undersecretary-general Abdul Rahim Farah, who visited Iran from Nov. 7 to Dec. 1.

His mission was based on a 1987 Security Council resolution that resulted in a U.N.-brokered ceasefire in August 1988 and also asked the secretary-general to investigate responsibility for the war.

In a report on Dec. 10, Mr. Perez de Cuellar blamed Iraq saying that although Iran had encroached on Iraqi territory, this "did not justify Iraq's aggression against Iran."

Technically, the two reports could fuel Iranian demands for compensation from Baghdad, which is already obliged to pay huge reparations stemming from its August 1990 invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

A Security Council source

said that it would be counter-productive at this time to make Iraq compensate Iran, a measure not clearly spelled out in the 1987 resolution.

Initial reactions from Tehran said the government appreciated Mr. Perez de Cuellar's efforts, particularly on the need to collect damages through "international channels," the Iranian news agency, IRNA, reported.

Mr. Farrah, in his report, said he arrived at the \$97.2 billion figure for "non-military war damages" on the basis of Iranian government's assessments, computed at 1988 replacement costs.

He said other indirect losses, such as the war's impact on the country's social and educational institutions, would have considerably raised this figure. But they were excluded because of the difficulty in calculating them.

Iran's oil industry was also severely damaged but because of its central role to the economy, immediate repairs were made to keep the oil flowing, he said.

The report also noted "that the quantity and technical quality of the reconstruction effort is impressive, particularly since it has been almost completely undertaken through the domestic mobilisation of resources."

But it said Iran's level of reconstruction was a "small fraction of what needed to be done."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Le Monde et Vous
19:00 News in French
19:15 Documentary
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Land of Hope and Gloria
21:10 Climate and Man
22:00 News in English
22:20 A Man for All Seasons

PRAYER TIMES

05:08 Fajr
06:30 (Sunrise) Duha
11:38 Dhuhur
14:23 Asr
16:46 Maghrib
18:43 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedda, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terzianite Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383. Tel. 628543.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 665326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675991

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

More rains are expected in the various parts of the Kingdom, and snow is expected to fall in hilly areas. Winds will be westerly to northwesterly fresh. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy and rainy and winds will be fresh and seas rough.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman 0/3
Aqaba 6/14
Dumra 2/6
Jordan Valley 7/10
Yesterday's high temperatures: Am-

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

man 4, Aqaba 15. Humidity readings: Amman 100 per cent. Aqaba 50 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Basim Qaddoumi 644024
Dr. Abdul Majed Sheri 791405
Dr. Ahmad Sumeih 752118
Dr. Abdul Aziz Taboun 707070
Firas pharmacy 661912
Al Azma pharmacy 776336
Al Azma pharmacy 637055
Narouth pharmacy 636792
Al Salam pharmacy 626730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Abu Baker (—)
Dr. Al Shamsi pharmacy (275352)

ZARQA:
Dr. Hisham Hiyat (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Fire Brigade 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 731211
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896290
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 660100

Jordan Electricity Authority ... 815615

Electric Power 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53300
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport 08-53300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/22
Khalifeh Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Alkheir Maternity, J. Amn. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 643362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 661714
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845945
Al-Musaber Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Irbid, Al-Muhajiroon 77102/3
Al-Basit, J. Asrafieh 75111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 6024050
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)98732
Al Huma Modern Hospital (09)90590

IRBID:

Princess Banaa Hospital (02)273555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272725
Ibn Al-Hafsa Hospital (02)247100
Aqaba:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (02)53200-4, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
09:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:00 Jordan (RJ)
09:30 Dhahran (RJ)
09:30 Laraca (RJ)
09:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
16:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

Rural regions' electrical bills to increase

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government plans to collect the cost of the electrification of the rural regions of Jordan by imposing additional charges to the bills for subscribers, according to a report published Tuesday in Al Ra'i Arabic daily.

The report quoted informed sources as saying that a total of 206 villages will be covered in the project, which was expected to cost JD 23 million.

An extra fil per kilowatt per hour consumed will be added to the bills issued to subscribers so as to raise funds for the project. It is expected to raise JD 3 million annually, noted the report.

The report said the government, which will be implementing the project through the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), will also be imposing the one fil extra

charge on bills for at least seven years to come up with the needed sum for the project.

Should the government resort to borrowing the JD 23 million, it would have to pay at least JD 3 million interest on the sum over the coming eight years.

The JEA, which generates the electricity in Jordan and then sells it to the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPCO) and the Irbid District Electricity Company (IDECO), and over the years demanded that the rural regions be supplied by electricity and had been urging JEPCO and IDECO to carry out such projects.

According to the report, the JEA had early in 1980 suggested that the government collect one fil per kilowatt consumed to be paid to the two electric power companies to enable them to

carry out this project. Successive governments, however, approved of the plan but failed to implement it.

Still, the two companies which have concessions to carry out electrification projects in the Amman and the Irbid regions had gone ahead with their rural electrification plans incurring additional financial expenses without any compensation from the government.

Sources at the two companies were quoted as saying that the two companies will not forfeit their right to demand compensation for the part of the rural regions they supplied with electricity before the freezing of the plan took effect.

JEPCO had sustained severe losses as a result of its expansion and its management had been

adamantly refusing to respond favourably to workers demand for better pay. JEPCO sources said that the workers are now threatening to stage a strike sometime in January to back their demands.

JEPCO management sources said that the company has sustained JD 3 million in losses due to paying extra for the spare parts and equipment following the decline in the value of the dinar and because the company had to honour its various commitments towards expansion under the concession given it by the government.

The workers are demanding what would amount to JD 2.2 million annually in increases, a health scheme and end of service compensation.



Guardrails installed in downtown Amman and other measures to alleviate the traffic problem are being blamed for a decline in business (File photo)

Chamber of Commerce complains of harmful effects to businesses of downtown reorganisation plan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Plans to reorganise traffic in downtown Amman and the long rail built along the pavements to stop pedestrians from spilling onto the streets have stirred a dispute between the Amman Municipality and the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

The chamber board met in an emergency session Monday evening to discuss the new plan which, they said, have had a detrimental effect on the commercial businesses downtown.

The chamber set up a committee to take up the question with the concerned authorities at Amman municipality as previous individual merchants' contacts with the municipality proved fruitless, according to Chamber President Mohammad Asfour.

Amman Municipality officials had said earlier in December that plans are underway for reorganising the downtown areas of Am-

man at the cost of JD 2 million to facilitate traffic movement. The rails, estimated to be 2,000 metres long installed along the pavements, were part of the plan.

According to Mr. Asfour, the new plans, which include some changes in the direction of traffic, have adversely affected the buying and selling activities, with some merchants reporting a 60 per cent drop in business.

The committee set up by the Chamber of Commerce board will be demanding from the municipality the following:

- Return to the old system.
- New system is confusing to motorists and pedestrians alike, they said.
- Removal of the rails so as to allow pedestrians to visit shops and various stores across the street.
- Special arrangements for unloading goods to stores from trucks at certain points.

— And creation of areas where cars can park downtown so customers can shop.

Upon announcing the reorganisational plans, engineer Hussein Madani, the project director, said that the reorganisation would save JD 2 million worth of fuel now consumed by vehicles in traffic jams. In addition, there will be less pollution in the area, which contains the main shopping centres and banks.

Mr. Madani noted that the installation of additional traffic lights, building of pavements and other improvements entailed in the plan would have to wait until funds have been secured.

Several merchants and storekeepers in downtown Amman have been airing their grievances in the daily papers about the harmful effects to their business of the rail and the changes in traffic directions.

As tawjihi students prepare for tests, weather may delay examinations

AMMAN (J.T.) — Tawjihi students will start a 10-day mid-year examination session Thursday in different parts of the Kingdom and Ministry of Education sources said nearly 73,176 male and female students are to take the tests in 971 examination halls.

The sources said that students will take the literary, scientific, commercial, agricultural, industrial, hotel management and nursing streams will take the examinations, which were prepared by the

Ministry of Education. 9700 male and female teachers were assigned the task to supervise the examination session at the assigned halls.

The ministry's teachers normally begin marking and evaluating the students answers as they are received. Each subject is evaluated separately. The results will not be out before the end of February, officials said.

The same students will take their second and final examinations by the end of May 1992.

In view of the current bad weather conditions, sources said that the Ministry of Education could be making special arrangements which might mean delaying certain examinations.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thouqan Hindawi said in a statement that should the snow fall continue, the ministry could take a decision Wednesday to delay the start of the tawjihi examinations.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Cuba

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to Cuban President Fidel Castro to congratulate him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian government and people on Cuba's national day. King Hussein wished Mr. Castro continued good health and happiness and the Cuban people further progress and prosperity.

King congratulates Sudan

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to Sudanese leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir to congratulate him on his country's national day. King Hussein wished Mr. Bashir continued good health and happiness and the Sudanese people further progress and prosperity.

IDB grants 11 loans

AMMAN (Petra) — The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) has granted 11 loans worth JD 466,000 to finance industrial and tourism projects. Of the 11 loans, three worth JD 233,000

were extended to new projects which will be producing lighters and clothes. Five loans worth JD 63,000 were extended to existing industrial projects for expansion purposes. Two loans worth JD 170,000 were granted to two tourism projects to help them purchase cars and furniture. For the year, the IDB has granted 107 loans worth JD 15.39 million.

Sawt Al Shaab names new director

AMMAN (Petra) — The board of directors of the Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily has appointed board member Mohammad Totah as director general of the company as of Dec. 24 when he assumed his new duties.

Upper House to meet

AMMAN (Petra) — The speaker of the Upper House of Parliament will hold a meeting Wednesday to discuss a number of draft laws referred to the House. The session will be attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the cabinet ministers.

Sboul leaves for ministers' council meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Interior Minister Jawdat Al Sboul Wednesday leaves for Tunis at the head of a Jordanian delegation to take part in the meetings of the Arab Interior Ministers Council due to open Thursday.

The three-day meeting is expected to discuss topics related to a pan-Arab strategy on combating crime, inter-Arab cooperation in security matters and decisions passed by the first conference of Arab Police Chiefs, which was held recently in Tunis, with particular attention on drug abuse.

The meeting will also discuss a study prepared by the council's permanent secretariat related to facilitating the travel of Arab citizens among Arab states, exchange of information about crimes and criminals and the prospect of issuing a unified travel card for vehicles from various Arab states travelling across borders.

Mr. Sboul is accompanied to the meeting by Public Security Department (PSD) Director Fadi' Ali and several other officials.

A technical committee had been meeting in Tunis over the past few days to prepare for the ministerial meeting.

Roads closed as Kingdom braces for more snow

By A Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Severe weather conditions, heavy rain and blizzards Tuesday swept over the eastern Mediterranean countries as a result of the low depression center northeast of Cyprus, according to Meteorology Department Director Ali Abanda.

Dr. Abanda said in a statement to Radio Jordan that the depression is accompanied by severely cold wind blowing from the polar regions causing a sharp drop in temperatures.

On Tuesday, snow fell in Jordan on hilly regions, at least 1,000 metres above sea level. By midnight Tuesday a new cold front was predicted to affect the Kingdom, causing further decline in temperatures and bringing about more hail and snow in Amman, Balqa, Ajloun and all other hilly areas in the northern and southern regions of Jordan, Dr. Abanda said.

He said that the severe weather conditions will continue through Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

By noon Tuesday, roads were still passable but many of them

ern parts of the capital and the road to Salt were difficult to travel on.

The official said that parts of the road leading to the Jordan Valley were affected by land-

Amman municipality on alert

AMMAN (Petra) — The greater Amman municipality put all its equipment and machinery on alert in preparation for any emergency that might arise because of the prevailing weather, municipality sources said Tuesday. The sources said part of the equipment and machinery is available at the municipality's emergency office in the Raas Al Ein area. Other equipment is distributed over the remaining 20 constituencies of the capital, they added. Citizens can call the municipality's telephone numbers, 787111, 787109, to report any problems, they said.

were covered by snow, making travel difficult depending on the location, according to the Public Security Department (PSD).

A PSD official said that roads in Sweileh, Wadi Seer and west-

slides and traffic had to be diverted to side roads. The official said that in the northern regions around Irbid, road-clearing equipment went into action after roads had been blocked by snow.

These roads were mainly around Jerash and Ajloun.

The official cautioned motorists to travel very carefully.

The president of the University of Jordan announced the closure of the university in the next two days in view of the severe weather conditions and as roads are being blocked by the current storm.

Meanwhile, the PSD announced that it was taking extra measures in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Works and the Civil Defence Department to deal with any emergency on the roads and in residential areas affected by the current storm.

A spokesman for the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company in Zarqa said that extra measures had been taken to ensure sufficient fuel to all regions of the Kingdom.

Police and municipal authorities in Tafleeh, Irbid, Karak and other areas have reported that they were taking extra precautionary measures to deal with any emergency.



Ministry preparing plan to help modernise works in Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat Tuesday said that the ministry is preparing a new plan to achieve qualitative progress in municipal work.

The plan envisages a modernisation of legislations of the ministry's duties and activities and expands its terms of reference to enable it cope with the increasing volume of work.

The new plan gives wider responsibilities to mayors to help them improve the services offered to the citizens, the minister said. He pointed out that the ministry will hold a national conference for chairmen of municipal councils during which they will discuss means of developing municipal work and services through involving the parties concerned in developing local management.

He noted that the ministry had prepared a memorandum calling on the government to authorise an increase in the mayors' salaries. The ministry had allocated JD 3 million this year to support local councils, he added. A similar amount was also earmarked to the village municipal councils to spend on their projects during 1992 and to enable them overcome their difficult financial situations, he said.

Dr. Tubeishat, who was speaking during a meeting with provincial governors, mayors and heads of village councils in Balqa Governorate, stressed the importance of abiding by the organisation's provisions and called for directing special attention to cleanup campaigns, planting of trees and constructing new gardens.

In this regard, Dr. Tubeishat pointed out that the ministry was in the process of preparing a work plan to construct a garden in each city or village and to name it "The Haslemite Garden."

At the end of the meeting, an intensive debate took place during which the minister pointed out that the cities and villages development bank was ready to grant loans to any municipality to help it finance any investment project. He called for the fair distribution of services in all the cities and villages of Jordan and added that the ministry in the process of developing the municipal and rural affairs departments and to create a new maintenance unit.

Lower House speaker reviews ties with Iranian delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat Tuesday met with the visiting Iranian delegation headed by Atallah Mahajirani, the assistant for parliamentary and legal affairs to President Ali Hashemi Rafsanjani and discussed with him issues of common concern.

Dr. Arabiyat said that Jordan had faced and is still facing the Zionist challenges and that it had lived the Palestinian question since its beginnings.

He added that Jordan had always been on the frontline in defending the Arab Nation.

Dr. Arabiyat said that Jordan had always supported Palestinians and the Palestine cause and pointed out that the Lower House includes a special committee on Palestine and the occupied territories.

Mr. Mahajirani said he had noted the effective role played by the Lower House in all fields, particularly in the field of national legislation and implementation of government decisions.

He noted that the Palestine question is a basic issue for the Iranians and voiced his country's support for it. He added that the Iranian Consultative (Shoura) Council has a special committee on Palestine.

Mr. Mahajirani congratulated Dr. Arabiyat on his re-election as speaker of the Lower House.

At the end of the meeting, an extensive debate took place between the Iranian delegation and members of the Lower House. The debate touched upon the Gulf crisis, elections in Algeria, the conditions in the region, the peace conference and the situation of the Islamic Nation.

Minister visits Zarqa, reviews social situation

ZARQA (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development plans to open two offices in Zarqa to promote the voluntary work and the role of charitable organisations in the Zarqa Governorate, Minister of Social Development Amin Mashaqbeh announced Tuesday.

The ministry also plans to widen the scope of activities of the National Aid Fund (NAF) in order to ensure aid to the greatest number of needy groups in the governorate, the minister said.

He was visiting Zarqa to meet with Governor Mohammad Al Shobaki and other local officials to review services and projects in the region.

The Ministry of Social Development is directing its attention to the needy groups and it plans to promote the role of charitable and voluntary organisations in all regions, the minister said.

He said special attention would be given to a programme entailing vocational training courses stressing the need for small-sized income-generating projects to deal with the questions of poverty and unemployment in the Zarqa region.

The ministry will also give due attention to the work of the NAF with the purpose of providing for



GERMAN AID TO PSD — The German government has announced that it will offer equipment aid to the Public Security Department totaling 1.5 million Deutschmarks. According to an announcement Monday by the German embassy in Amman, the aid is to cover the period 1992-1994. The scope and details of this aid have

to be fixed through mutual agreement, the announcement said. Earlier this year, the German government provided Jordan with three helicopters and vehicles with special equipment to combat drug trafficking and monitor border areas to prevent smuggling.

the needs of poor families. A JD 8 million allocation in the 1992 budget will be distributed to these needy groups in Jordan, the minister added.

Mr. Shobaki briefed the minister on the social development services in the Zarqa region and about the general situation in the city.

Zarqa Social Development Department Director Ahmad Lafi said that two charitable societies in Zarqa are now spending JD 25,000 monthly to aid 1,200 needy families in the region. Several deputies from the Zarqa area attended the meeting.

Later, the minister, accompanied by some officials, visited the charitable societies in the Zarqa region and inspected their activities.

By Dr. Abdallah Maki

Jordan Times

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Economic Forum

The logic and language of disequilibria

IT has become fashionable for those who pose as sophisticated economic intellectuals to talk about economic disequilibria. This is legitimate because the Jordanian economy is really suffering from disequilibrium which has to be straightened out. However that talk is sometimes done vaguely or in very broad terms which, by accident or design, are used to cover arbitrary and sometimes erroneous economic theorisation.

We must always remind ourselves that trade deficit is an integral part of the current account deficit. If the current account is in surplus, it is meaningless to worry so much about trade deficit.

The current account deficit is, in turn, part of the deficit of the balance of payments (b/p), when there is such one. More precisely, the current account is part of what is termed the "basic balance of payments", that is the overall b/p less the monetary sector. The overall b/p must by definition be always in a state of equilibrium so that we would not, in scientific terms, talk about a deficit or surplus in this context but only about a favourable or unfavourable b/p.

The basic b/p deficit is the only disequilibrium that matters with respect to the economic crisis of Jordan represented in our

inability to pay our external loans; and it is the core of the adjustment process. The IMF-sponsored economic adjustment programme has addressed this problem through rescheduling of loans which fall due and thereby eliminated the deficit, but only artificially. Rescheduling of loans postpones the problem but does not solve it. Other measures prescribed by the IMF are not related to healing that deficit except in a very indirect way. Floating interest rates, abolishing subsidies on basic consumption goods, rationalising domestic credit and compressing the budget deficit are measures which are sought as a matter of principle because they serve to improve the performance of the economy even if it is already performing very well. In other words, they are not tied to a specific problem, be it external indebtedness or otherwise.

Free trade and a liberal import policy stand out as odd measures among the standard bundle of measures which the IMF prescribes to adjust the stalled economies of developing countries. This oddity is exclusively very true when the problem at stake is the inability to repay external loans, as is the present case of Jordan. This problem originally emanates from excessive imports of goods and services and subsequently has to be reversed through less imports. A policy of imports based on open borders

will only exacerbate the indebtedness dilemma, delay its solution and can actually perpetuate it. Imports do not consume only foreign exchange earnings, which must be allotted to the retirement of external loans, but will also "consume" economic growth itself, because they transfer income to foreigners who supply these imports and thus dangerously constrain the growth of the indigenous economy. This detrimental impact on economic growth is so dangerous because it is invisible and therefore can pass unnoticed and continue unchecked. It is needless to say that the ultimate solution to the problem of economic underdevelopment itself lies in economic growth because this growth is the only mechanism that can provide effective solution to competing and sometimes contradictory objectives such as the need to bolster savings and consumption, giving wage increases and containing inflation, paying external debt and raising living standards, checking budget deficit and avoiding raising tax rates.

Economic disequilibrium is almost a constant feature of economic life, adjustment is also a continuous need. What remains is to identify the best means for achieving this goal. Such identification is not the monopoly of the "privileged" few. To admit this is one of the prerequisites of a successful economic management and a successful adjustment.

Learning from history

LIKE 1991, the year 1992 could also be a decisive one. The past year saw the dissolution of the Soviet Union as a superpower, the destruction of Iraq, the breakup of Yugoslavia and numerous events of great significance. It also ushered in a new world order, though still in its formative stages.

The year also saw the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict start a long-sought quest for peace. That year will surely be remembered in the annals of history as a turning point.

So what is in store for 1992?

Surely, no one can predict with any certainty what the new year holds. The past year and indeed the past decade have shown how difficult it is to tell with any near certainty the future. People around the world are full of both fear and hope; fear of things going wrong, like they did in Yugoslavia, for example, and hope that the new year would straighten matters and solve problems.

Most certainly peoples and nations will try to position themselves in ways that would ensure, protect and enhance their interests. The U.S., the sole world superpower, will have to define its role in the new order. It will have to choose, as President George Bush recently asserted, between taking an active and constructive role in world politics or opting for isolation. Europe, individually and collectively, will also have to assert a new position for itself in world affairs. The emerging new countries — the ex-Soviet republics — will most probably find 1992 a difficult year given the internal and external problems that plague them.

While Arabs get ahead with their quest for peace, they face tremendous dilemmas. Inter-Arab fighting, food shortage, poverty, social imbalances, lack of liberty and democracy, these and many more are problems we have to face and address, not only in 1992 but beyond. No matter what explanations are offered for the present-day backwardness of the Arab World, Arabs must think anew and think differently. Our means and methods, from one family rule to the Arab League, are outdated, inefficient and corrupt. The pre-Gulf war order, that many are trying to resurrect, will not serve us any more.

Jordan is certainly on the right track despite all the difficulties and all the expected hardships ahead. The country's present problems should prompt us to devise alternative methods for addressing them. We have found, with much pain and bitterness, that many of our past-held beliefs were not based on solid and firm grounds. We have seen that many of our methods have failed us because they are either outdated or ill-perceived. We must change and fast. And 1992, with all the connotations that go with it, must prompt us to begin the search for a decent vision of the future.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Tuesday voiced congratulations to the government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker for Parliament's endorsement of the 1992 budget and said that the deputies' debate of the budget law showed a high degree of national awareness and reflected Parliament's determination to work with the government to overcome the present economic difficulties. Indeed, the Parliament members' discussions and views reflected their concern to protect the democratic process and to maintain close working relationship with the government to help it deal with chronic issues facing the Kingdom, the paper added. The deputies, as well as the government, realise the magnitude of the economic problems facing Jordan and the Jordanian citizens sincerely hope that close cooperation between the legislative and executive authorities will now emerge as the highest level to rid the country of these ills, the paper said. It said that the questions of poverty, unemployment and soaring cost of living can only be dealt with through such close cooperation and the question of the country's debts must be handled with care and serious efforts if the country is to be tidied over the present difficult situation. The Jordanian citizens, said the paper, now look with a greater measure of hope that the government and Parliament will join in a pool their efforts to achieve the aspired goals.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily tackled the situation in Lebanon when he said, Zionist agents were still active trying hard to destabilise the country's security. Abdul Rahim Omar said that all indicators point to the fact that Israel was behind the car bomb attack in West Beirut and behind the American University of Beirut blast, and stressed that the Israeli leadership was trying to create divisions in Lebanon to revive the civil strife and sabotage the country's security. Israel has found that it gained nothing from the security arrangements that brought about an end to the civil war in Lebanon, that its objectives have not been realised in the south, and so it is now turning its attention back to creating trouble for the Lebanese, hoping to undermine their peace, said the writer. There is no doubt that Israel has found itself besieged by the Arabs, demanding an end to its occupation of Lebanon, Syrian and Palestinian lands, and has resorted to criminal actions to revive the cycle of violence in the region so that the Arabs can forget about Israel's occupation, the writer added. The Lebanese government, he said, ought to take all the necessary measures to end for good the presence of Israeli agents in Lebanon so that the Lebanese can once again enjoy peace and security.

ON July 8, 1991, Luis Antonio Morales Ortega, a journalist well known for his investigation into human rights abuses in his native Peru, announced via Radio Wari, a local radio station, that he had received death threats from the Anti-Terrorist Liberation Command, a paramilitary group believed to be linked to the security forces. Just five days later, two young men in a passing car shot Luis Morales dead as he tried to escape into the house of a relative in the city of Humananga in Ayacucho department.

During the previous months the Anti-Terrorist Liberation Command had threatened staff at Radio Wari, leading them to broadcast death threats against two other journalists who had accused the security forces of committing human rights violations in Ayacucho. The text of the threats included the following: "We tell this rat, delinquent, terrorist, disguised as a journalist, this bloody dog Magno Sosa Rojas... that he will die like a beheaded dog... we are following, his steps very closely, his days are numbered..."

Since 1982, when Ayacucho was first placed under military control, journalists who have brought human rights abuses to national and international attention have been targeted by the security forces or allied paramilitary groups. At least 15 journalists have been killed by the security forces or groups linked with them in Ayacucho department in the last nine years.

Journalists in other parts of Peru are also at risk. In August 1991 the Anti-Terrorist Liberation Command issued death threats against Jorge Chávez Morales, a journalist for La Republica, a Lima daily newspaper which has given extensive coverage to human rights issues. In countries around the world, journalists attempting to expose human rights violations have themselves become victims. Some have been killed outright, others have been silenced by being imprisoned or threatened with imprisonment. Also, writers, novelists and poets whose work is deemed critical of the authorities risk detention, imprisonment, torture and in some cases death. Some of these journalists and writers are prisoners of conscience, jailed because of their professional activities or for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

In Malawi, Jack Mapanje, the internationally renowned poet and a prisoner of conscience since Sept. 25, 1987, was released on May 10, 1991, after nearly four years in detention without charge or trial. Under Malawi's Public Security Regulations, the official reason for his detention was never disclosed, but it is widely believed that the increasingly political themes of his poetry had incurred the disapproval of the authorities.

In Colombo, Sri Lanka, in the early hours of Feb. 18, 1990, Richard de Zoysa, a journalist, broadcaster and actor, was dragged from his home by six armed men, one or two of whom were reportedly wearing police uniform. The following day his naked body was washed up on a nearby beach. An autopsy found that Richard de Zoysa had died instantly from gunshot through the neck and the head fired at close range.

The Sri Lankan and international press has speculated about the possible reasons for the abduction and murder of Richard de Zoysa. His killing may have been linked to the "disappearance" in January 1990 of Lakshman Perera, who had produced a play written by Richard de Zoysa called "Me Kauda? Mokada Karanne?" ("Who is he? What is he doing?"), a phrase used to

describe President Ranasinghe Premadasa during the presidential election in December 1988. Other reports suggest that Richard Zoysa was killed in retaliation for his news reports on the human rights situation in Sri Lanka.

In June 1990 Richard de Zoysa's mother, Dr. Manoranj Saravanamuttu, and Batty Weerakoon, the lawyer appearing on her behalf at the magisterial inquiry into the abduction and killing of her son, received a series of death threats telling them to stop pursuing the case. Dr. Saravanamuttu, who had witnessed her son's kidnapping, had named a senior superintendent of police as one of the abductors.

The magisterial inquiry was discontinued on Aug. 30, 1990, and no action has been taken against the police officer allegedly involved.

Foreign and national journalists in Guatemala continue to receive threatening messages, apparently from members of the security forces or those acting with their acquiescence. Some of those threatened have felt obliged to leave the country for their own safety. Others have been openly attacked.

Byron Barrera Ortiz, a Guatemalan journalist, was shot by two men on a motorcycle while driving in his car in Guatemala City in October 1990. His wife, Refugio Araceli Vilanueva, also in the car, was killed instantly; Byron Barrera and a friend who was with them were wounded. Shortly after the attack, Byron Barrera Ortiz and his two children went to live abroad.

Byron Barrera later stated that his life was saved only because he was wearing a bullet-proof vest. He said that he had been followed by two men on a motorcycle the day before the attack, an incident he reported to the secretary of public relations of the Republic of Guatemala, who promised to investigate.

Byron Barrera had returned to Guatemala in 1985 after several years in exile. He was the director of the Central American News Agency, and vice-president of the Guatemalan Journalists Association. Byron Barrera had been the editor of the weekly newspaper La Epoca, which had published many articles critical of the government, until June 1988 when the newspaper's offices were fire-bombed reportedly by members of the security forces. The newspaper never reopened.

In an open letter dated Nov. 1, 1990, Byron Barrera stated that "Guatemala continues to be a land for no one, a land of impunity, death and desolation." He added: "I have had to explain the truth to my children: the people of their country who are conspicuous for their ideas of freedom are assassinated."

On Aug. 10, 1991, Byron Barrera returned to Guatemala to present evidence to the Fifth Court of Penal Justice in Amatitlán, department of Guatemala, which was investigating the case. While there he gave a news conference declaring that he believed members of the armed forces were involved in the attempt on his life.

Guatemalan journalists were anonymously warned not to continue publishing information on the case. In August 1991, Juan Carlos Ruiz of the weekly magazine, Crónica, Hugo Garcia of the daily newspaper, Gráfico, and Silvino Velásquez of the daily newspaper, Prensa Libre, received anonymous threatening telephone calls, warning them to stop reporting on well-publicised cases concerning the alleged involvement of military personnel in human rights violations, including the attack on Byron Barrera. The Prosecutors Office at the Public Ministry which was

investigating the case reportedly received similar threats. Two lawyers hired by Byron Barrera were also threatened and have since withdrawn from the case.

According to Byron Barrera, the authorities have shown little determination to proceed with the investigation into the attempt on his life and the killing of his wife despite evidence implicating members of the armed forces.

Some countries bring criminal charges against those who publish real or implied criticism of the authorities. Such charges include "showing contempt," "spreading false information" and "sedition."

Two well-known journalists in Cameroon were convicted in January 1991 of publishing an article criticising the government. Pius Njave, editor of Le Messager, a Douala newspaper, and Célestin Monga, author of the article, were charged with showing contempt for Cameroon's head of state, the courts and members of the national assembly. Despite nationwide protests, the two were convicted of "showing contempt for the National Assembly"; they were given suspended prison sentences and fines.

transmitting state secrets. He denied all charges of espionage but was convicted by the court and jailed. Amnesty International (AI) believes that Chang U-gyun is detained for his peaceful political views and activities and that the charges of espionage against him have not been substantiated.

In Rwanda, at least 30 people accused of offences related to freedom of expression and association were tried between March and October 1990. Further arrests and trials of journalists occurred in 1991. Although many newspapers have begun publication over the past two years, the government has been unwilling to tolerate open criticism of government officials or policies. Rwabukwisi Vincent, the editor of Kanguka newspaper, was arrested in July 1990 and charged with "endangering the security of the state," apparently because he had travelled to the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, and met Rwandan exiles, including the former King of Rwanda. The State Security Court twice failed to convict him due to lack of evidence. But in October 1990, after Uganda-based Rwandese exiles attacked Rwanda's northern border, the same court sentenced him to 15 years' imprisonment, apparently without hearing any new evidence. In May 1991 Rwabukwisi Vincent was released by order of the Cour de Cassation (Supreme Court), pending a new trial by the State Security Court. A month later he was one of four journalists arrested for publishing articles critical of the authorities. Rwabukwisi Vincent was charged with endangering the security of the state, apparently because the authorities said what he had written for publication expressed support for the rebels. He was released in September 1991 but the charge against him reportedly was not dropped. It is not clear whether or not he will be brought to trial.

AI continues to be concerned by the Iranian government's endorsement of threats against the life of Salman Rushdie, the British author of The Satanic Verses. In February 1989 Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa (religious edict) stating that the book was blasphemous and that it was the duty of Muslims everywhere to put the novelist to death. AI is not aware of any direct attempt by agents of the Iranian government to kill Salman Rushdie, but the repeated endorsement of Ayatollah Khomeini's edict by Iranian government authorities indicates that they would condone his extrajudicial execution. AI has repeatedly called on the Iranian authorities to withdraw their support for any threat to Salman Rushdie's life.

Kenyan writers and journalists have been imprisoned for advocating multi-party democracy. Gitobu Imanyara, editor of The Nairobi Law Monthly, was arrested at his office on March 1, 1991. In the February edition of the magazine he had published a manifesto of a new opposition political party and an editorial criticising the government for tribalism. Gitobu Imanyara was held incommunicado until March 5, 1991, when he was taken to court and charged with publishing a seditious publication. He was refused bail and held in harsh conditions in Kamiti prison near Nairobi. A month later he collapsed from a severe migraine at the Nairobi Law Courts, where he was awaiting a ruling on an application for bail. He was returned to prison and held in a cell with no bed, mattress or other furniture. He was later admitted to hospital, where he was kept chained and under armed guard. He was released on May 28, in improved health, and the seditious charges against him were dropped.

Gitobu Imanyara received the

Golden Pen of Freedom award from the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers in early 1991. He resumed his work at The Nairobi Law Monthly despite continuing police harassment. HE WAS REARRESTED ON Nov. 15, 1991, with other pro-democracy activists and may be tried for a "public order" offence.

Edward Oyugi, a writer and Professor of Educational Psychology at Kenyatta University, was sentenced on July 11, 1991, with three others to seven years imprisonment for holding a "seditious" meeting. He has been a consultant with the office of U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Council of Churches and has written books and articles on philosophy, sociology and psychology.

Edward Oyugi and three others had been arrested one year earlier following public debate on the issue of multi-party democracy in Kenya which led to widespread unrest on July 7, 1990. The four have each lodged an appeal to the High Court following the six-months trial. AI expressed concern about the fairness of their trial and, in particular, that no steps were taken during the trial to investigate the prisoners' allegations that they had been tortured. No evidence was brought by the prosecution that the four had discussed or planned violence against the government. The seditious laws in Kenya have frequently been used to jail government opponents.

Following their conviction, Edward Oyugi and the three others were transferred to Naivasha maximum security prison where conditions are very harsh. They are reportedly allowed only one visit of three people, including their lawyers, each month.

In 1990, the Vietnamese authorities arrested several critics of the government — including journalists and writers — beginning a crackdown on intellectuals and dissenters which continued into 1991. Duong Thu Huong, a prominent Vietnamese writer and dramatist, was arrested in April 1991, reportedly for trying to send "SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS" OUT OF THE COUNTRY. These documents reportedly included papers and letters written by Vietnamese writers to leaders of the Communist Party of Vietnam in preparation for the seventh party congress scheduled to take place in June. She was reportedly detained in a residence belonging to the Interior Ministry until her release in November.

Duong Thu Huong is the author of many novels, poems, articles and plays and has emerged as one of the most significant writers in post-war Vietnam. She was a member of the Communist Party of Vietnam for 20 years but left the party in 1990 and has since become one of its sharpest critics.

Salih Al Azzaz, a prominent Saudi Arabian writer and journalist, was arrested in November 1990, reportedly while taking photographs of a women's demonstration. He was reportedly arrested on suspicion of being one of the organisers of the demonstration, in which dozens of Saudi women drove cars in convoy through the streets of Riyadh in protest against the country's prohibition of women drivers.

Salih Al Azzaz was, at the time of his arrest, editor-in-chief of the magazine of the Saudi Arabian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. AI considered him to be a prisoner of conscience, detained because of his involvement with a peaceful demonstration. He was denied access to his family until the end of December 1990 and was released on March 4, 1991, after four months of detention.

In many countries journalists sympathetic to prohibited political parties or organisations, or

working for publications aligned with them, have also been subjected to human rights violations.

Marwan Hamawi is one of a group of Syrians arrested in the mid-1970s on suspicion of having links with the pro-Iraq wing of the Ba'ath Party. At the time, he was Director of the Syrian news agency, SANA. He has been detained without charge or trial in Al Mezza military prison, Damascus, since his arrest in March 1975. He has been adopted as a prisoner of conscience by AI. The Syrian authorities have not responded to any of the appeals made by AI on his behalf.

Prior to his appointment as Director of SANA he had served as press relation attache in the New York office of the Arab League and as the League's acting observer at the U.N. He is held under state of emergency legislation which has been continuously in force in Syria since 1963.

Abd Al Karim Outafan, a playwright and actor, has also been detained without charge or trial in Syria since July 1985. AI has adopted him as a prisoner of conscience. He was arrested on suspicion of being a member of the Party for Communist Action (PCA), a prohibited political party in Syria. Members of the PCA have frequently been imprisoned and tortured because of their opposition to the government, their demands for more democratic freedom in Syria and for the release of all political prisoners.

Hamadi Jebali, editor of the Tunisian weekly Al Fajr (Dawn), was sentenced by the military court in Tunis in January 1991 to one year in prison, with immediate effect, for publishing an article calling for the abolition of military courts in Tunisia. Mohammad Nouri, a Tunisian lawyer, was sentenced to six months imprisonment for writing the article. Both men were charged with "defamation of a judicial institution." Although Mohammad Nouri's sentence has expired he remains in prison, apparently under investigation for new charges. AI Fajr, now banned was the organ of an Islamic organisation Al Nahda, which does not have official recognition from the state. Members, sympathisers and suspected sympathisers of Al Nahda have recently been targeted for arrest, detention and torture.

Dozens of writers and journalists were detained without charge or trial in Sudan after a military government, backed by the National Islamic Front, seized power from the elected civilian government of Sadiq Al Mahdi on June 30, 1989. They were imprisoned because of their peaceful opposition to the military government. Most were released after a general amnesty for political prisoners was announced in April 1991.

Arop Madit Arop, Head of the Information Centre at the Sudan Council of Churches, was arrested in March 1990 after requesting a visa to attend a Church Service Development meeting in Germany. His passport was confiscated and he was taken to Kober prison. In October 1990 he was transferred to Haifa Al Jadida prison in eastern Sudan. He was released in May 1991. At no time during his detention was he charged or brought to trial.

Under the government of Sadiq Al Mahdi, Arop Madit Arop was the editor of the English language newspaper, Heritage, until its closure by order of the Governor of Bahr Al Ghazal province in 1988. Heritage had called for an end to the conflict in southern Sudan between the government and the armed opposition Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and had published

parties or organisations, or

(Continued on page 5)

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Move aside Arnold, Jean-Claude Van Damme is here

By Philippa Neave

NEW YORK — He flies through the air with the grace of a Russian ballet star and his kick is as masterful as Bruce Lee's. Here is 185 lbs. Of pure muscle, a real hunk of a man who moves with the elegance of a panther. Jean-Claude Van Damme — "The Muscles From Brussels" — is the hottest number in Hollywood action movies since Arnold Schwarzenegger.

It is hard to believe that he was so puny as a child; his father almost despaired and enrolled him in karate classes to try and build him up. "I was a fragile kid and I come from a very humble family," the star recalls. "In Belgium tennis, golf and those kinds of sports are expensive. Karate was very inexpensive." Now on the big screen, the kid who was the shrimp of the class sends an opponent flying with one fine kick and

kills another with a well-placed flick of the foot.

Over the years the young Belgian built up not only his body but also his personality. He believes martial arts is what gave him the mental strength to fight it out in the Hollywood jungle and make it. "Karate brought me a fantastic mental strength," he emphasises, "and it really helped me in the movies, never to give up." The odds were not in his favour when he arrived in the USA 10 years ago with no contacts, no legal working papers and no English. He worked as a limousine driver, a pizza man, a bouncer, a carpet layer, all the while hoping for the big break.

The break came, but it wasn't that big. Van Damme started out as a stunt man. Then he starred in a series of low-budget movies. The scripts were invariably corny but the action-packed

pictures drew the crowds and showed Van Damme's talent as a martial arts fighter. They also proved he has pull at the box office: Cyborg grossed \$9.5 million, Bloodsport brought in \$15 million, Kickboxer earned \$50 million. His latest success, Double Impact, a more demanding picture with a meatier script in which he plays twins, showed that Van Damme is not just a mean fighting machine but also a capable actor. Now he has got his sights set on doing "good movies." Resting in his Los Angeles ranch, he explains: "I was obliged to sign many contracts when I was starving here. I was so hungry to make films I signed for too many movies for nothing. Now I feel I've paid my dues ... Because of those movies I became a name in the industry and now I have the power to do something better. I am very happy to have made them; otherwise I would be nothing today, so I say a big thank you to those small independent companies because they took a chance with me — a new face. They made money with me and I am happy for them."

Van Damme is happy for himself too, and it helped that the new face was a handsome one. "It's incredible but 80 per cent of my fan mail comes from women, that's why I want my next film to contain much more acting, passion, love and romance," he admits. Cosmopolitan magazine voted him one of the top 10 "hunkiest hunks" and he has been voted one of the 10 "sexiest" men in America.

Perfect muscle tone and a handsome face are not enough to make a star, though, there has to be something more. "Don't ask me what it is!" He laughs. "I hate to talk about myself ... Some people say it's charm, others say it's something in my eyes, or maybe the fact that I can look vulnerable. I think if you're honest and really believe in your dream, people can see that in your eyes, especially on the big screen."

His natural charisma doesn't hurt, and his undiluted enthusiasm is catching. He still speaks English with a strong French accent

and cannot seem to talk fast enough to say everything he has to say. "I make friends easily and I'm very open. I have travelled a lot and karate has helped me because I feel protected, and I am very perceptive about people, very aware. I can smell things out."

Gritty determination is also part of being a champion. "I started at 9 and had a great teacher. But no matter how good the teacher is, the student must push himself to reach a certain level. The only secret is training: I used to train four to five hours a day four to five times a week. The training was extremely laborious."

Champion at 19

At 19 Van Damme was the European Professional Karate Association's middle weight champion and soon after he opened his own health and fitness club in Brussels. He gave all that up to try his luck in Hollywood. "My teacher did not believe I could be successful in the movies. He told me, 'you don't realise how hard it is. It's impossible.' Well now I'm the only Belgian who's made it here!"

He bought a large property outside Los Angeles and brought his parents over from Belgium so they can spend their retirement years in the warmth of the California sun. They live with Van Damme, his wife, Puerto Rican-born body builder Gladys Portugues, their two children Kristopher, 5 and Bianca, 1 and three dogs. He fell in love with Gladys after seeing her picture in fitness magazines. "My wife trained under a special female programme."

She never took any (body-building) drugs, some women do that and they get very big and very strong, but it's too much, I don't like that. My wife is very beautiful and feminine," he says with obvious pride.

At 31, he still trains every day in his own gym, at home. "I work out for three hours every day on my own. I do cardiovascular exercises, stretching, karate ... I know my body by heart and after all these years, I know what it needs and the way to go."

Van Damme is careful about what he eats, especially before a movie, when there are a lot of close-up body shots. "I eat a lot of white meat — chicken and turkey, fish and lots of vegetables, also rice and pasta. I'm not one for sweet things," he says.

Van Damme studied classical ballet for several years in Belgium and was invited to join the Paris Opera Ballet Company. His signature move is a spectacular leap in the air with a 360 degree turn and a kick that lashes out at 75 miles an hour. Certainly, he says, his ballet training taught him elegance in movement.

"I also have very long legs, that helps a great deal visually. I love to do all movements to perfection. A nasty kick for the sake of a kick is stupid. I want to please the audience with something beautiful, to conjugate power and beauty. Dance helps a lot with that."

Quest for perfection

The quest for perfection is something he learned in his martial arts training and it is as mental attitude he practices daily. "I meditate during my training, at the same time, I concentrate my mind and that's very potent," he says. "Doing a film is a lot of very hard work. I get up every morning at 4 or 5 a.m. to train. Then I go to the set we shoot, after that come the rushes, then the production and editing, the promotion ... Every film is like a new competition you have to win. My last film was better than the one before, and the one before was better than the previous one. If I can improve every time, I will be satisfied."

"All my directors were first-time directors, now it's time to have some big-name directors. I want to do good movies, it's as simple as that. I've just signed a deal with Columbia-Sony and Universal studios and right now they are fighting like warriors to find me a good script."

Van Damme just finished shooting his next picture, Universal Soldier, about superhuman fighters, co-starring with Dolph Lundgren. When he started out with his first movie Bloodsport, which

was shot in Hong Kong, he was paid \$50,000 for the part. He got \$600,000 for Double Impact, and his salary went up to \$1.5 million for Universal Soldier. He will reportedly receive \$3.5 million for his next Columbia picture.

But he says he won't let success and money go to his head. "Karate teaches you to remain humble. What the philosophy brings you is an ability to judge yourself. I could become a guy with a swollen head but I try to remain humble and I treat people the same way I did 10 years ago. When I'm invited to functions, I like to shake hands with the parking-lot attendants and the waiters."

Van Damme thinks he can resist all the Hollywood hype. "I'm not playing their game and I never will. Again, I thank my training because every day when I go into the gym it is very hard physically and I face the same difficulties ... I am just Jean-Claude Van Damme, a simple man with a simple brain, just like everybody else."

Charity work

Not quite everybody else. Stardom has enabled Van Damme to lend his name and fame to charitable endeavours, in particular the "Make a Wish Foundation" in aid of sick children. He just completed a celebrity event benefiting the foundation. "I am very proud to be a part of that," he says. "I have kids writing to me from all over the world. One kid wrote from London. He has leukemia and he said 'I'm going to fight like you against my disease.' That kid made me cry. He was too weak to fly out here so I sent him all the Van Damme videos and posters ... Sometimes you feel depressed, but those kids are so strong mentally, I respect them so much. I'm like their hero — for me it's the best gift ever. At least I can contribute."

He would like to do more, but "the problem is I'm not big enough yet as a star to put some really big money together. We'll have to wait two or three years." By then he hopes to realise his dream project — to direct his own movie. "It's going to be the



There is no miracle to a well-toned body, says the man, nicknamed "The Muscles From Brussels"; it just hard work.

best karate picture ever!" he enthuses. "It will be a mix of Ben Hur and Spartacus with martial arts ... something like Dances With Wolves with karate. It's a wonderful story and everybody wants to do it, but I want to direct it and I want to make that movie for kids." The idea came to him when he visited a monastery in China where children undergo rigorous training in martial arts and other disciplines. Van Damme wants to include some of those children in the movie, but he will give no further details. "If I say any more, we'll have a TV show based on it tomorrow!"

Meanwhile he plans to continue improving his acting and to get away from the violent, beefcake image of his early roles. While admitting that much of his audience is young and looks to him as a role model, he denies promoting violence. "It's the movies!" he says. "Parents should explain to their kids about movies. My son has watched all my movies and I take him onto the set and

show him the fake blood and all that. I know there is violence in these action films but I believe the reality of what is happening in the world is much worse. Besides, in my movies it's not gratuitous violence ... I'm fighting for a good cause, I'm not out there kicking ass for no reason!"

Van Damme's message to youths is a simple one: "Believe in yourself. The best learning experience for kids is sports — any discipline. Any type of sport is great because people come together regardless of race, colour or religion and train together. In sport you don't look at differences, you look at what you can accomplish together. Sport forges a strong character and a healthy outlook on life. And when you win, you become stronger and more sure of yourself. We all need that." "Nobody is perfect. On the screen I'm the best, but everybody has their problems. I'm not an angel but I try to do the best I can. The most important thing is to be honest." — World News Link.



This knock-out kick, is one of Jean-Claude Van Damme's trade-mark moves and the result of grueling hours of training in martial arts and ballet.

Want to be a modern butler? Learn to pack a pistol

By Peter Millership
Reuter

LONDON — If you're thinking of becoming a "gentleman's gentleman" in the 1990s you might have to learn how to pack a pistol.

Ironing the morning newspaper to rid it of unsightly creases and anticipating the employer's every whim remain essential skills for any butler.

But more and more rich employers are worried about security — and want body-guard butlers, says Ivor Spencer who set up his butler school 11 years ago and now places butlers all over the world.

"Butlers can be trained to handle small arms. And the experts teach them to fire and kill if the situation demands it," he said over afternoon tea at London's exclusive Ritz Hotel.

Mr. Spencer, speaking in the soothing tone he uses to teach his butlers, said he could also produce butlers adept at evasive driving and karate.

As well as tending to the table and possibly supervising other servants, some butlers are now expected to act as personal assistants, organising schedules and foreign

travel for their employers. A number learn to fly helicopters.

But traditional skills are still important. All of Mr. Spencer's butlers are taught how to choose the right wines, cigars, flowers and chic restaurants, and how to shop in top stores.

Before World War II, there were about 30,000 butlers in Britain acting as chief of staff over the servants that wealthy families kept in their grand houses.

Writer P.G. Wodehouse idealised the butler in the character Jeeves who tended every need of his feckless master Bertie Wooster with the response, "very good, sir."

But by 1980 fully-employed butlers were an endangered species and looked on their way out with only about 100 or so around.

The boom years of the 1980s saw renewed interest in maintaining a discreet and well-trained personal servant.

This prompted Spencer to open his school for butlers. A royal toastmaster who proposes the traditional toast to Queen Elizabeth at banquets, Mr. Spencer now supplies butlers to the United States, Europe, Latin America and the Far East.

Paid about \$50,000 a year plus allowances, butlers learn to work with royalty who live like soap stars and soap stars who think they are royalty.

"We still place people with the 'old money,'" said Mr. Spencer, referring to royalty and the long-established elite. He has supplied butlers to the British royal family.

Although trainees are taught "all old money was new money once," a recent survey of his graduates showed rock stars flunked when it came to favourite bosses.

Top was Britain's royal family followed by foreign royalty, businessmen, aristocrats, film idols then pop stars.

At the school, butlers walk with a champagne glass on their heads to practice deportment. They learn polite neck-bends for ordinary visitors and bowing from the waist for VIPs.

"A butler must have presence," said Mr. Spencer, offering another smoked salmon sandwich with a flourish.

Mr. Spencer says there are still amateurs on the butler circuit. "They're just waiters dressed up as butlers."

At his school he passes on many tips that make a butler a "gentleman's gentleman."

When a greedy guest piles food on his plate then asks if he has taken too much, the correct response is: "Certainly not sir, the chef will be pleased."

When a suspicious wife asks the butler if he knew her husband was sleeping with his secretary? "Not to my knowledge madam."

Handy tips: A bottle of Chablis can be quickly chilled by wrapping it in wet newspaper and holding it out of a speeding car ... decanters may be cleaned of wine stains with rice and soapy water.

A butler's watchword is discretion. "We never talk," said Mr. Spencer. "That's your death knell as a butler."

One butler telephoned Mr. Spencer to say he was being badly treated in California by a big television star and was quitting.

"I said, whatever you do, don't complain that she got drunk, was rude and never paid her bills. Say she was charming."

The ultimate accolade was given to a butler whose master announced he was divorcing his wife.

"But sir, shouldn't you tell madam first?"

"You're right. But I'm leaving today and I want to take you with me."

By Janet Snyder
Reuter

PEKING — Cellulite has yet to make it into the Chinese lexicon, but women in the world's biggest beauty market know that thin is in.

To help them in their quest for slimmest is Chen Baoen, a grandfatherly senior pharmacist, arguably China's answer to Western beauty pioneer Estee Lauder.

The 65-year-old scientist concocts new cosmetics amid dusty beakers of mystery fluids in a tiny room that looks like an alchemist's lair.

A huge cauldron hisses on a brazier, stirred by an assistant in a white coat, his head wreathed in clouds of herbal vapours.

Mr. Chen swears by his pet invention, a cream that looks and smells like oatmeal, as a sure-fire way to melt unwanted fat from thighs, tummies and buttocks.

The recipe comes partly from a ninth-century Tang Dynasty tome on pharmacology and his own experiments over 40 years.

"I developed our slimming cream in 1988 when I found Chinese women were complaining about getting fat," Mr. Chen said in an interview.

His slimming cream has sold briskly, with sales in its inaugural year at 24 million yuan (\$4.5 million). Since then sales have been steady, Mr. Chen said.

Mr. Chen's employer is Dabao, China's first and

Chemist reaps fat profits on slimming craze in China

largest cosmetics manufacturer, which opened its door in 1985 when sweeping reforms paved the way for a less hardline approach to personal grooming.

Up to then Chinese women were stalled in their pursuit of glamour by more than 30 years of puritanical Marxist shibboleths that frowned on vanity.

To stay slim in the straight-laced days of Chairman Mao Tsetung, women had to be content with hard physical labour and pedalling a Flying Pigeon bicycle to work.

It didn't matter much if you had a spare tyre around your middle. Who could tell since in Mao's egalitarian society everyone wore the same baggy, padded jackets and pants?

In the late 1970s things began to change.

Suddenly it was all right to make money, to own property and — to care about one's looks.

Mr. Chen's daughter-in-law, for one, is happier looking in the mirror after using Dabao's slimming cream. She claims a trimmer waist after

several applications of the concoction.

"Her friends marvelled at how slim she looked afterwards," Mr. Chen said. He didn't say how many pounds she lost.

One customer wrote to say she lost a half a kg (one pound) per day while using it. "It worked almost too well because I started to shrink," she wrote.

Mr. Chen keeps the ingredients a closely-guarded secret, but said the recipe calls mainly for herbs.

How does his wonder cream work? "I can't explain to you exactly the scientific reason why it works, only that it stimulates circulation to help eliminate fat from the tissues," Mr. Chen said.

For moderately plump people, it takes about two jars priced at a hefty 200 yuan (\$37) each to do the trick, he said.

The average monthly urban wage is about 150 yuan (\$26), although peddlers and other private businessmen earn much more.

The post-proletarian beauty drive has meant big bucks

for Dabao, comp-ny public relations executive Zhang Jianjun said.

Total sales last year were 40 million yuan (\$7.4 million), with \$1 million in overseas sales.

Rare for a state-owned enterprise, Mr. Zhang said the company, which belongs to the Peking City Affairs Bureau, is profitable.

It is relatively enlightened in its policy to provide jobs for the handicapped. Half of Dabao's factory staff are deaf-mute, including Mr. Chen's sprightly laboratory assistant.

Dabao is eager to branch out overseas. Foreign visitors receive a glossy brochure in English that lists herbal hair restorers, lotions made from crushed pearls, breast-enhancing creams and a male potency cream code-named "714."

One of the company's most popular items is the curiously-named Sod Cream.

"Sod is the newly found anti-decrepitude medicine to keep your looks always tender and even more lovely," a company brochure said. Sod stands for superoxide dismutase," Mr. Chen said.

Mr. Chen's latest project is to develop what he calls the "one week change" cream. An aromatic experimental batch was stewing on a cooker during the interview.

"In one week it will make your skin fair," he promised, harking back to the classical Chinese ideal of a lily-white complexion.

Can you outsmart kids?

By Maha Addasi

If you have been selected to babysit some children on New Year's Eve, there are a few things that you must be aware of, or resistant to, before you tackle that "mission."

First of all, and just in case you have not figured it out yet, you should know that to be the one to babysit on such a special occasion as New Year's Eve someone must have put a bad spell on you.

Why? Because you are in for a rollercoaster evening with the little devils that would make you reconsider ever being left in the same room with a child for the rest of your life.

Let me start with the mild examples: Every time you tell the children that it is time for bed they sweetly request five more minutes.

Twenty such "five more minutes" later, you realise that your persuasive techniques leave a lot to be desired, and the little monsters are still up and about.

Of course, you realise that this is because you are not the kids' parent and they know that you cannot take any drastic measures against their "attitudes." Simply put, kids are so smart they know an opportunity when they see one and they milk each and every one for all that the "opportunity" has to offer.

If you start to exert some firm demands such as "if you don't sleep now the big bad wolf will gobble you up" the kids jump. Not to bed, mind you, but to their "Plan B." They know you are bluffing about the wolf but they also sense that the "five more minute" business is not working any more, so they suddenly get hungry.

So it is 11:30 p.m. and the kids, who have never seen the world at such a time except when they woke up from nightmares, are making your life a nightmare because you do not know what to feed them.

Just a hint: Do not, I repeat, do not give the kids junk food even if they are hungry and even if it is a bribe so they sleep afterwards. Mainly because, they do not sleep and because you never know how the facts are "twisted" the next day when the kids wake up with a soar stomach because they ate late.



Now, if you suddenly get angry and become even firmer with the kids (probably because you are getting sleepy and grumpy yourself), they do not despair. They start to chime to you all the songs and nursery rhymes they learned from one day.

Basically, the best way to babysit the kids on New Year's Eve is to keep them up as late as possible, preferably dancing to loud music so that the next day when their parents are tired the kids would not be up to bother them.

January Birthstone

The Garnet

Family — Varieties of crystallised minerals.
Colour — Red, brownish-yellow, violet, reddish-orange, green and rich brown.

Geographical sources — South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Sri Lanka and North America.

Legendary background — The word garnet comes from the Latin and refers to a possible resemblance to the seeds of the pomegranate. The finest stones have an unblemished transparency and glow like a smouldering fire; this could give credence to the legend that Noah lit the Ark with a garnet. The Ancient Egyptians saw it as a symbol of life and during the Middle Ages it was thought to be a remedy against feverish illness. In India and Persia it was considered to have preventative powers and worn as an amulet was said to protect the wearer from poison, plague and lightning.

Qualities — Friendship, power and, in the case of marriage, happiness and success due to constancy.

Jewellery interpretations — By the middle of the 3rd century B.C. the Greeks favoured massive gold rings, set with garnets wider than the finger. During the Roman period carved gemstones appeared and garnets were used, notably the bearded head of Jupiter Serapis crowned with a corn measure. Among the many varieties of rings worn in the 18th century garnets were mounted on simple hoops, possible forerunners of the eternity ring. In Victorian times brooches and bracelet centres were encrusted with filigree and enlivened with the rich glow of garnets. Cabochon rings were also popular, the surface of the dome was often decorated with a star of tiny seed pearls.

Toiday — Garnets are used in reproduction Victorian jewellery and also feature in large rings, either cabochon (dome), or square cut.

Notable January birthdays — Joan of Arc, Robert Burns, Mozart.

A year to savour — at least for weirdness

By Jeremy Gaunt
Reuters

NEW YORK — At the end of a dynamic year, from the Gulf to the vanishing Soviet Union, let's not forget the detonating Dutch toilets or the exploding pig of Transylvania.

Not to mention that British animal rights activist acquitted in court of frolicking indecently with a dolphin.

It was a year of the spectacularly strange, a year that saw U.S. troops fighting side-by-side with Syrians in the Gulf and Russia saying it wants to join NATO.

But it was also a year of weird news that failed to make such big headlines. Consider, for example, the Romanian farmer who was treated for burns after a pig he was preparing for Christmas blew up.

Transylvanians eat pork rind as a seasonal delicacy. To prepare it, they tighten the skin by inflation the pig with a pump.

The hapless farmer didn't have a pump so he tried butane gas. The resulting blast tore the pig to pieces. The farmer spent three days in hospital but was home in time for Christmas.

Commiserations also to the Dutch family whose toilet blew up for the third time in 30 months.

"It destroyed the whole pot," said the head of the house, apparently unimpressed by scientific explanations that the explosions were caused by ground pollution.

Elsewhere in the Netherlands a docker was savaged by a shark — a frozen one that fell on him as he was unloading it.

Not all of 1991's misfortunes were quite so dramatic. In Pennsylvania, an unemployed carpenter was arrested for using a 22-calibre pistol to break the ice with women.

The would-be casanova drove up behind attractive women drivers, shot out their right rear tyres, then kindly offered a ride to the nearest telephone.

Chinese authorities jailed a woman whose attempted pick-ups were decidedly more materialistic.

Answering some 2,000 lonely hearts advertisements with a photo of a beautiful woman — not her own — she conned hopeful suitors into sending her a total of \$968, a vast sum in China, to buy a bus or train ticket so they could meet. She never showed up.

Equally creative were the Taiwanese criminals who stole cars, leaving in their place a homing pigeon with a ransom note. Police tried using a telescope to follow the bird but it flew too fast and the thieves got away.

In pet-loving Britain, animal-rights activists had a mixed year.

They hailed the not-guilty verdict for the accused dolphin-frolicker — who said he would continue to campaign for dolphins to be freed from zoos — but were aghast at a fisherman who ate a bucket of live worms to raise money

for charity.

"It's just like spaghetti," the fisherman said. "A quick chop soon stops them wiggling too much."

"We take a very dim view," said one animal rights group.

"If that is not enough to help those New Year's diet resolutions along, consider these culinary delights from China, chronicled in Can-

ton's evening newspaper: At the Jialu Dining Hall rat kebab is a featured item, along with braised rat, rat casserole with mushrooms and the ever-popular fried rat with racoon.

And the newspaper provided this recipe to round it off: Take one cockroach, marinate in wine for a day, fry it in beef fat and smother with chocolate.

PEN PAL

Dear Sir,

I would like a female pen pal in Jordan. I am 20 years old, my hobbies are music, travel, swimming, fishing, surfing, reading and running.

My name is Phil Thomas.
Address: P.O. Box 146, Esperance W.A. 6450, Australia.

I would like to write to a university student in Amman, who speaks English.

Sincerely,
Phil Thomas.

LETTERS

Dear Sirs:

Please publish my name and address in your letters column.

My name and address is:

Steve Mitchell,
P.O. Box 340,
Makati, Philippines.

I am a 28-year-old Canadian. I intend to spend my holiday in Jordan next year and would like many friends there.

Thanking you so much.

Steve Mitchell

Hope

By E. Yaghi

"No," he screamed. "I won't let you do it. You can't cut off my legs!"

"Son, I'm afraid we have no other choice," the doctor said in a low voice. "I'm sorry, there's nothing we can do. Your legs were so badly mangled from the car accident that we can't salvage what's left of them. They will have to come off, or you'll die!"

Basil glared back at the doctor, his expression twisted in defiance and pain. He turned his face on his propped pillow. Streaks of tears made a path down colourless cheeks. He couldn't let the doctor see him cry or tell him that death was far better than to live half a person. At least he could die whole. He slipped into semi-consciousness and heard voices around him like a nightmare. "He's wasted his youth," a relative whispered.

"The young have no respect for life. They think they'll live forever and that they can dare death. What a shame!"

Another added: "His poor parents! I feel so sorry for them. Of course his bride will have nothing more to do with him. To think such a tragedy happened on his wedding night!" offered a third.

"Quiet!" he shouted. "All of you. Leave me alone!" but the words died in his throat and no one could understand his mumbles.

Early next morning when the sun was bright, sparrows fluttered about to feed their young and blue gray pigeons made their morning rounds, sympathetic looking aides rolled Basil's bed to surgery. But no one could provide him adequate comfort for the horror he was going to experience. Inside the operating room, he stared nervously at the bright lights as if he were playing a part on stage, noticed the cold instruments which reflected the rays of overhead lamps, heard their jangle as the nurses prepared them, smelled alcohol and tasted the anesthetic. He was dizzy. His head swam, his vision blurred, his heart beat faster and faster as if it were going to explode and then something swallowed him into a deep black hole where there was no time, no pain and no reality.

Hours later, in the recovery room, Basil felt a searing pain shoot through his legs. He parted his lips which were cracked and dry as though he had been crawling without water in a desert. His tongue, thick and coiled, stuck in his mouth and was slow in yelling the words stabbing his mind. "My legs are killing me. Oh God, please have mercy. I have so much pain, please help me!"

His body jerked when an injection of pain killer pierced his skin and again he lapsed into a fitful sleep between two worlds. At least, when he was fairly conscious, he was wheeled moaning to his room, without his legs. Large stumps covered with thick bandages ended above the knees he once had and bulged under his blood stained white sheets. The day of surgery was catch and go for Basil. He floated in and out of consciousness, sometimes groaning, sometimes screaming with excruciating pain. He was barely aware of his mother standing watch at his bedside, her warm hand reassuringly patting his shoulder and he dimly heard the footsteps of his father pacing back and forth like a pendulum over the pit of death.

Days later while hurt still ripped through Basil's mind and tore at his legs, his bride paid him a visit. He yanked his head away from her and ordered: "Go away. I don't want you here!"

"I'm your wife, Basil. I must see you, take care of you. Thank God you're safe!"

He turned to her and his eyes met her red ones. "Go away, I said. Go to your father's house. You'll get married again. I don't need your pity and I don't want your tears. You're divorced!"

Anger flamed on his countenance. He held no sympathy in his scowl, but his bride still protested, "No, you can't

divorce me. I won't go back to my father's house. I'll stay with your parents. My place is with you. Your fate is mine and I accept whatever God gives us."

"Quiet!" he yelled. "I'll hear no more. You'll do as I say. I'm in no position to lie here and argue with you, I'm divorcing you. I refuse to be a burden on anyone other than my mother and father. Now get out! I never want to see you again!"

She ran out of the hospital room, her hands covering her face. His request would be granted, he would never see her again. He settled down in his bed to drown himself in his own world of misery and self-pity. He refused to eat. He wouldn't talk to his parents or see any relatives or friends. He wished he could die. He gritted his teeth whenever bouts of pain struck him and became sullen and bitter.

His parents, crushed by his amputations, debated what to do with him. One day while he slept, his mother said: "There must be some way we can help him. It's been such a terrible shock losing his legs!"

"Of course being deprived of his legs is beyond comprehension. But his tragedy is ours too. I've never seen him so defeated and without hope. But I have an idea. When he gets better, let's take him to London!"

Basil's mother opened her eyes wide. "What are you saying? Why should he go to London? What will the hospital do there, restore his legs?"

"No," his father shook his head, a sign of a smile on his lips. "It's for mental therapy. His doctor suggested that we should put him in a ward where he will be surrounded by patients who are much more unfortunate than he, then perhaps he will appreciate the fact that he is yet alive and not worse off than he is!"

So, after Basil recovered from surgery and its physical trauma, he flew to London, accompanied by his mother and father. He refused to look out the plane window and notice the white clouds stretching before him like a white sea. He showed little interest when the plane descended and sights before him came to life. He remained insolent until his parents placed him in a rehabilitation ward where most of the patients were bed ridden and could hardly move.

Gradually he lost his bitterness. Eventually a light of thankfulness gleamed in his eyes and one day he resignedly accepted his fate and even told his parents, "You know mom, dad, there is so much to be grateful for. My accident could have been much worse. I still have use of my hands and my mind is healthy. Thank God I'm still alive. I'm ready to learn a trade which will support me so that I won't be dependent on you for the rest of my days. I feel like enjoying myself for a change and I would really like to see some smiles planted on your faces instead of sad and sympathetic frowns."

He gestured with his hands to the handicapped around him. "Look at all the people that can't move as much as I can. I want artificial legs and I want to learn how to walk on crutches. There is still so much to live for and I have no time to spare!"

On his return home, Basil enthusiastically looked out the plane window and wouldn't let his parents get a moment's rest while he exclaimed about all the marvels of travel and sights. Back home, few could believe that Basil was the same person who, not too long ago, had both his legs amputated and would have nothing to do with anyone. Now he is a source of hope and inspiration to all who know him and he wastes no time feeling sorry for himself, but lives his life happy to be alive and of use to his society. "Bitterness is a disease," he advises his friends. "No one liked me when I was nasty and wallowing in self-pity and I didn't like myself either. I don't know how my parents put up with me, but I guess they sort of had to since they couldn't just throw me away and get a new son!"

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Jan. 2

8:30 The Simpsons

9:10 NBA Basketball

10:00 News in English

10:20 Movie Of The Week

Cowboys Don't Cop

A young boy finds out the hard way that when everything falls apart, there is always somebody good enough to extend a helping hand.

Friday, Jan. 3

8:30 Coach

Father And Son Reunion

Hayden, a peacemaker, brings together Luther and his father who Luther has not seen for fifty years.

9:10 Simon And Simon

A woman dies in mysterious circumstances while on her way to Mexico. The Simon brothers try to uncover the cause of the death.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Chancer

Weapons From The Wall

Stephen Crain, head of the bank, saves himself from bankruptcy through internal dealings with his girlfriend Jo. He saves Douglas Motors too.

Saturday, Jan. 4

8:30 American Funniest Home Video

This Saturday's episode will

be choosing the winner of the \$10,000 prize.

9:00 Encounter

9:30 Qed Robot

A display of machines programmed to serve mankind at home and in factories, in addition to robots with programmed movements.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Mini Series

And The Sea Will Tell

It is based on the true story of a mysterious double murder on an exotic island hundreds of miles away from civilisation, and the puzzling sensational trial that followed.

Sunday, Jan. 5

8:30 Empty Nest

Nick, the husband of nurse La Verne, leaves with the football team to another city. She meets a handsome young man with whom she spends a lovely time.

9:10 Nippon

Taking On Detroit

Japan's tiny post-war car industry grinds into gear, pulls out into the fast lane and eventually overtakes the juggernauts of Detroit. An astonishing tale told by the engineers and salesmen who did it.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Continuation of The Mini Series

Monday, Jan. 6

8:30 Hey Dad

Nadge is heartbroken because his girlfriend decides to leave to Europe while Martin buys a computer which upsets Betty, his secretary.

9:10 Capital City

The first episode of a powerful drama in the world of money and bonds as seen through Shane Dealers and its staff.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Mini Series

The Elite

An exciting thrilling adventure of a group of experts who could stop the melting of a nuclear reactor and recapture two kilograms of stolen platinum.

Tuesday, Jan. 7

8:30 Evening Shade

The family will watch a video tape about the coach 30 years ago.

9:10 Mini Series

Colour In Creek

During the international economic recession, an Australian family looks for work with little money that they have and with no jobs available they face lots of troubles and surprises.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Mini Series

Titmus Regained

John Mortimer's sequel to the highly successful Paradise Postponed continues the story of The Right Honourable Leslie Titmus, MP. A ruthless, thrusting Tory, he has risen to power as secretary of state at the Ministry of Housing, Ecological Affairs and Planning, — better known as H.E.A.P. — and is currently in pursuit of a beautiful widow Jenny Sidonia. Three one hour films shot on location in London and in small villages in Oxfordshire tell a strange and compelling love story set against the battle over a new town, and of a man's inability to compromise over either his personal or political life.

Wednesday, Jan. 8

8:30 Teech

(New Comedy Series)

Gibson is a young, black teacher who grew up on the streets of Philadelphia and made a career out of teaching music to inner-city school children.

9:10 Documentary — Voice Of The Planet

The earth is in constant turmoil and man is subjecting it to constant pollution. While pollution is as much a blessing as the sun's radiation it is still very hazardous to health.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Mini Series

A Man For All Seasons

A global sampling of cultural events in 1991

By the Associated Press

ARTS and entertainment made headlines in 1991 in books, films and concerts. "Mozartmania" swept the classical music scene for the 200th anniversary year of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's death. The highlight in visual arts was Christo's trans-oceanic umbrella wrap, until two deaths overshadowed the display.

Here is a sampler of noteworthy events as selected by Associated Press correspondents worldwide:

JAPAN. Bulgarian artist Christo unfurled 1,340 blue parasols in a Japanese valley in a mammoth exhibition visited by 500,000 people. But tragedy struck when a Japanese worker was electrocuted while removing the display. A simultaneous exhibit

of 1,760 yellow umbrellas in California had to be closed early when winds blew an umbrella across a road and crushed a woman spectator against a boulder, killing her. "I will live with that tragedy to the end of my life," Christo said.

AUSTRIA. Much of music was dominated by "Mozartmania" to commemorate the death of the great Austrian composer in 1791. The highlight was Mozart's Requiem performed on Dec. 5 at an international televised funeral mass from Vienna's St. Stephen's Cathedral.

UNITED STATES. Dances With Wolves, the 19th-century saga of a white man who joins a Sioux tribe, swept most of the Academy Awards, including the Oscar for Best Picture. Many critics

said the best movie of 1991 was The Silence Of The Lambs, a horrific psychological thriller, with a brilliant portrayal of pure evil from Anthony Hopkins.

INDIA. Of 400 Hindi movies this year, one received international attention. Henna is a Romeo-and-Juliet story of an Indian man and a Pakistani woman — a tale of friendship transcending hostile borders. It was India's entry for the Academy Awards foreign film category.

GERMANY. Berlin hosted an exhibit on Rembrandt billed as the biggest ever on the 17th-century Dutch master. The show drew long lines of art lovers and also opened the refurbished old museum in former east Berlin. Other venues for

the exhibit are Amsterdam and London.

IRELAND. Dublin was the European city of culture for 1991. One of the highlights was festival which staged all 19 plays by Samuel Beckett, the Nobel Prize-winning son of Dublin who died in 1989.

BRITAIN. London's Royal Academy of Art staged a talked-about retrospective of pop art, including Andy Warhol's stack of brillo boxes and Roy Lichtenstein's blown-up cartoons.

The show revived the old debate about whether any of it really qualified as art.

ARGENTINA. Some 200,000 people turned out in Buenos Aires on Dec. 15 to hear Italian tenor Luciano

Pavarotti sing arias from operas. The nighttime performance was staged on the Avenida 9 De Julio, one of the widest thoroughfares in the world.

PARAGUAY. In Asuncion, Augusto Roa Bastos' novel, I, The Supreme, about Paraguay's loved and hated founding father, Jose Gaspar Rodriguez de Francia, was performed on stage last April. It was the first time many Paraguayans viewed the work, which was banned during the long dictatorship of President Gen. Alfredo Stroessner.

ITALY. Friends and townspeople turned out in droves to applaud Gian Carlo Menotti on his 80th birthday in July during the Spoleto Festival Of Two Worlds he founded 34 years ago. The

Pulitzer Prize-winning composer made a cameo appearance in his most recent opera Goya, which made its European debut at the festival.

SWEDEN. The Best Intentions, directed by Danish Oscar-winner Bille August from Ingmar Bergman's script, premiered Christmas Day on Swedish television and debuts at Cannes next spring. British, Italian and Scandinavian TV networks funded the movie about the courtship of Bergman's parents.

FRANCE. Les Miserables, the musical hit based on Victor Hugo's tale of human suffering, returned triumphantly to Paris after delighting audiences worldwide. French creators Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schonberg, whose original, 1980

version closed after three months, had feared their compatriots wouldn't appreciate the song-and-dance adaptation of a Hugo masterpiece. But Les Mis got rave reviews and is drawing full houses.

CHILE. A Santiago exhibition of works by world-renowned Chilean surrealist painter Roberto Matta, the first in this region in more than two decades. Matta, 81, lives in Italy.

BRAZIL. The runaway best-selling book in 1991 was Zelia: Uma Paixao (Zelia: A Passion) by renowned short-story writer Fernando Sabino. Sabino described the real-life romance between Zelia Cardoso de Mello, Brazil's first woman economics minister, and the married justice minister. Both resigned

when their story made headlines.

AUSTRALIA. Following a gala farewell concert by Australia's lady of the opera, Dame Joan Sutherland, there renowned tenors — Luciano Pavarotti, Jose Carreras and Placido Domingo — conducted separate, sold-out tours in 1991.

MEXICO. 1991 was a year of resurgence for Mexican Cinema, which had fallen on hard times after its "golden age" of the 1930s and 1940s. A total of 65 Mexican films were shown at 72 international festivals, including Cannes and Berlin, which hadn't had a Mexican movie in 14 years. Mexican films won prizes in Montreal, Italy, Berlin, France, Spain, Colombia and at the Festival Latino in New York.

Asia does booming business in Chinese antique forgeries

By Kathy Chen

Reuter

HONG KONG — A late Saturday afternoon laziness hung over Hong Kong's cat street as Western tourists and wealthy Chinese collectors browsed in its famous antique shops.

In one, an impeccably dressed Hong Kong man flipped over his magnifying glass and scrutinized a Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) blue-and-white porcelain bowl.

"I'll take it," he said with satisfaction after a quick, expert perusal, counting out a wad of \$500 notes.

The bowl at 5,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$640) counts as small change in the expensive world of Chinese antiques.

Even so, few buyers can

afford to act with such confidence these days, as heavy demand and soaring prices stimulate a huge industry in forged Chinese art throughout Asia.

"Forgeries have always been around, but the number of copied works has been growing in recent years as prices rise by leaps and bounds," said Philip Mao, a long-standing adviser to the Hong Kong Museum of Art and a collector of porcelain.

The Chinese antiques market virtually dried up during the Cultural Revolution, 10 years of political and social upheaval in China from 1966.

It revived in the mid-1980s. Art experts say almost any item is game for forgers. But

the most popular are paintings, antique jade and ceramics, especially Ming and Qing (1644-1911) blue-and-whites.

The best copies come from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and filter into the international market mostly through legitimate deals. Each piece usually changes hands several times.

"There are a lot of stories around," said a ceramics appraiser at a major auction house. "It's from an old collection, it's recently excavated, it's been in the family for five generations."

"Some dealers either can't tell (a piece is fake) or they just don't care," he said. Because of China's strin-

gent restrictions on antique exports, many genuine pieces make their way out of the country illegally.

Hoping their work will share the authenticity by travelling this route, forgers sometimes introduce their products to the market through Chinese smugglers, who sneak them into Hong Kong or the nearby Portuguese-administered territory of Macau.

Imitation has an old and venerable role in the history of Chinese art. Ming and Qing Dynasty painters diligently copied Great Sung (960-1279) works to master difficult brush strokes.

Some Chinese emperors ordered imperial works to be stamped with marks of previous dynasties which excelled in the medium.

Top Chinese artists continue to imitate the ancient masters, even selling copies under their own names. The difference is that they do not try to pass them off as the genuine article.

Most forgeries are made by less talented artists or on the side by craftsmen at major kilns in Taiwan and China. "The payoffs can be huge," said the ceramics appraiser. "A vase costs 300-400 Hong Kong dollars (\$38-50), but you put in a little more effort and you can turn out a half a million dollar (\$64,000) item."

"You can fire 100 of them and expect one to come out beautifully and pass it off for half the actual price of a real one. The profit may not be extremely attractive for Hong Kong artists, but it is very attractive for mainland Chinese ones."

Painters can earn 100 times more for forged works than for their own, commanding 100,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$12,800-25,600).

The huge potential profits and the growing sophistication of collectors have led to a great improvement in the quality of forgeries in recent years, art experts say.

Ironically, publications on antiques, which tell collectors how to distinguish between real and fake works, have

also helped forgers perfect their art.

Although authenticity tests are available, dealers usually still rely on a practised eye. "The keyword is skill. The originals were made by the best craftsmen who were masters of proportion and decoration. Today, forgers copy the form and shape, but the works lose some of the feeling," said the ceramics appraiser.

Painting and ceramics experts agree that a less than totally confident brush stroke usually provides the giveaway. Jade experts check to see whether colour and design match for a certain time period.

Most of the victims are

inexperienced buyers, often from newly wealthy classes in Taiwan, Singapore or Hong Kong.

But the increasingly high quality of forgeries means even experts sometimes get duped.

"I remember buying a blue Tang Dynasty (618-906) horse, the greatest possible rarity, for a quarter of a million dollars (\$32,000)," said a barrister who owns one of Hong Kong's finest Chinese art collections.

"It was probably on the cheap side so I should have known better. Of course I got my money back, but later I saw an almost identical one in a Kansas City Museum. It was such a good copy."

A great hunger for normality

Foreigners in a multicultural society

By Reinhart Renger

MUNICH — Treatment of the living together of Germans and Turks (here representing foreigners in general who have found new homes in Germany), is usually confined to sociological studies or to the calls of government leaders for greater tolerance.

Now, two authors whose books deal with such themes are enjoying celebrity and brisk sales. They are Jakob Arjouni and Renan Demirkan, two authors who approach the field from completely different angles. Judging by the sales figures, readers have taken to both.

In the books of Jakob Arjouni, it is a fictional character, a Turkish private detective with a German passport and the name of Kemal Kayankaya, who fascinates German readers. The main figure labours in the notorious red-light district of Frankfurt.

Arjouni has been enjoying growing popularity over the past three years with his rather curmudgeon-like character, who appears to live solely from the consumption of cigarettes and alcohol. Kayankaya is a loner, eking out a living from work in the midst of prostitution, economic crime, and police corruption. It is the sheer need to survive which prompts him to move about in this netherworld.

Readers purchase his novels with an enthusiasm that is a typical for German detective fiction. His volumes include such titles as Happy Birthday, Turke (Happy Birthday, Turk), Mehr Bier (More Beer), and "Ein Mann, Ein Mord" (One Man, One Murder). More than 120,000 Arjouni

volumes have been sold, and the well-known German film director Doris Dörrie is preparing to film one of them.

With Arjouni himself rather stingy in self-revelation, rumors, fueled by the assumption that only firsthand experience could have informed the pen of the plight of prejudice, the trials that Turks endure in everyday German life, such a pen must be Turkish. Besides, Arjouni isn't your everyday German name anyhow.

When it was discovered that he's neither a child of a troubled environment nor one of foreign stock on German soil, piqued reviewers accused Arjouni of deliberately having misled people to capitalise on a "false aura."

The son of a director and a publisher mother, Jakob Arjouni spent his youth not on the streets but in expensive boarding schools. Why should this detract from the appreciation of his literary talent or his aggressive approach to German realities?

Arjouni has no problems dishing it out — usually with a goodly dose of humour — even though he doesn't have the background of a street tough. His hero is convincing for the very reason that Arjouni, who lives in Berlin, didn't portray him as a "good Turk," a sort of "Robin Hood" of rectitude in a corrupt Frankfurt, fending his way through an ugly world.

He's hero with frailties, not much better or worse than his surroundings, a timeless figure of a fool who, all the same, lets nothing prevent him from holding a mirror to the face of others.

He pours vitriol on the lifestyles of his fellow Germans: "They attend exhibitions in New York, take off on safaris in Africa, eat smoke pot in Cairo, eat Japanese dishes, and want to instruct Moscow in the arts of democracy; they're cosmopolitan right down to their Parisian underwear. But the sight of a Turk without junk under his arm or ten dirty children, that they can't manage."

Arjouni's fictional detective knows Germany much better than the land of his fathers, but his outsider status is insurmountable, even when he flashes his German passport. In the eyes of others, a Turk is a Turk. This is the gist of Arjouni's message.

"May I take a look?" the real estate agent asks in the latest novel One Man, One Murder, and incredulously leads through the passport of the Turkish detective. "Not that Turkish origin is of any relevance to a rental lease. And, what with German citizenship clearly evident. Still, one wants to know with whom one has the pleasure, to be sure."

With grim irony, Arjouni pursues a dialogue that reveals prejudices to be the bedrock of commercial dealings: "I would have thought the Arab realm was more likely," the agent tries to slink out of matter, not realising that he's merely compounding the vileness of his prejudices.

Being a stranger in a foreign world, that, too, is the root experience of Renan Demirkan, born in Ankara in 1955. She left her Turkish homeland with her parents at the age of seven to come to

Germany.

At the time, the German government paid a bounty to Turkey for every recruited guest worker, an expression of the urgent need for workers in a dramatically growing German economy. Renan Demirkan's life has witnessed an unusual course. Today, she's successful actress, both on stage and in television. She feels more like a cosmopolitan in Germany, a role which doesn't draw much attention among Germans.

The difficult, troubled road to this point of social acceptance, that is the topic of her strongly autobiographical novel. Her book has since soared into the upper portions of the bestseller lists. The idea for her to write a book originally came from a publishing house reader, she says cautiously. Actors who try their hand at writing often have a "trying" time gaining literary acclaim.

Renan Demirkan's book had the good fortune that the intent and the narrative content harmonise well. The book, "Schwarzer Tee Mit Drei Stuck Zucker" (Black Tea With Three Lumps Of Sugar) reveals the difficult highwire act of loosening ties to familial traditions and entering into a new system of values.

Those who know the self-confident Renan Demirkan as a successful actress and recipient of a television prize may hope that a successful case of integration has taken place. With all the talk about growing hostility towards foreigners, we have here a positive model of living together.

But she doesn't make it that easy for the reader. Her

life in Germany is the story of an arduous journey (very much like the birth of the lead figure's daughter that provides the narrative backbone of the book). To fight her way through, Renan Demirkan had to move ever further away from her roots.

"I always imagined Europe to be one big train station, a kind of terminal station," she recalls her childhood expectations of the new land. "Where are you from?" asks the new teacher in fifth grade. Quite naturally, the Turkish youngster replies: "From Garden Street." "I mean, where were you born," the teacher adds impatiently. "In Ankara."

In later years, as a politically active youth, the author refuses to have anything to do with "the circles of the intellectual emigrants." They doted exclusively on the problems of the Turks, which she found intolerably narrow-minded. It even made her aggressive when queried about her nationality. "I'm a cosmopolitan!" She would retort angrily.

The budding Turkish woman is torn between cultures, the world of her parents, "that four-person miniature in an alien land," as she characterises it, and the politically laden world of her German companions during the seventies.

Only through the "betrayal" of her family and a subsequent reconsideration of her roots does she come to an inner compromise, one which strengthens her self-image, but which brings her parents much sorrow. Renan Demirkan has since married an Austrian and now lives on a farmstead in the province of



Renan Demirkan, Turkish actress who lives in Germany, hit the bestseller lists with her autobiographical novel about living life together between Germans

and foreigners. The actress is also successful on the stage and television. She's shown here in a scene with actor Götz George, star of a television crime series called Tatort.

Steiermark — when she isn't on a stage in Germany or standing on a studio set for camera takes.

Asked in one interview whether she had many Turkish friends, she replied, almost evasively, that "I have a very small circle of very trustworthy friends, indispensable people. I'm like a tree with thin roots sticking in Turkey, the thick ones in Germany. And the blossoms petals above, they're something very unique."

One reviewer characterised Renan Demirkan's refusal to let herself be handed

around as a "token Turk," as someone who made it all the same, as a "hunger for normality."

Even the Arjouni detective Kayankaya believes in a kind of normality which the world around is unwilling to grant him. Especially people in the prevailing culture are particularly far removed from a positive relationship to a multicultural society.

For new members of society, the experience of cultural alienness in Germany is a genuine gain, a situation which, unfortunately, rarely applies in the opposite direction. Germans sometimes ex-

perience the alien in their own land more as a threat than as an enriching experience. At the same time, the sudden departure of marginal groups one has become accustomed to for gaining a smug (but detractive) sense of moral superiority, also proves disturbing.

Arjouni has recognised this contradiction. "At a certain point, it becomes useless to profess solidarity anymore, to say how terrible it all is," he declares in talking about his detective novels. "Instead, one has to apply humour and fight more." — IN Press.

Implant encapsulated pancreas cells control diabetes in lab mice

By Paul Rezer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A researcher says he has corrected diabetes in mice by implanting pancreas cells under their skin, suggesting a therapy that may one day control the disease in humans without the need for daily insulin shots.

Dr. Paul E. Lacy of Washington University School of Medicine in St.

Louis said the laboratory experiment proved that pancreas cells, called islets, can thrive and produce insulin while encapsulated in porous tubes implanted in the body.

"This was the first time that anyone had been able to get encapsulated islets cells to work under the skin," he said. Dr. Lacy said if the same result is achieved in experiments on dogs or monkeys, then the technique could be ready for human trials within three years.

A report on the study was published in the journal Science.

Dr. Lacy said the key to the islet implant is a one-inch-long hollow tube that resembles a fiber thread and has the diameter of a toothpick. Holes in the side of the tube are large enough to permit oxygen and nutrients to pass inside to nourish the islet cells and insulin produced by the cells flows out into the blood stream.

The islet cells are protected from

rejection by the body because immune system cells, that normally would kill foreign cells, are too large to enter the tube and attack the islets, the researcher said.

Once in place under the skin, the encapsulated islet cells act in the same way as the insulin-secreting cells in a normal pancreas, the researcher said.

"They respond to rising glucose levels," said Dr. Lacy. "When the glucose goes up they hold the blood

sugar at normal limits."

In a healthy body, rising levels of blood sugar, such as following a meal, causes the pancreas to secrete insulin, which helps metabolize the sugar, or glucose. The insulin is secreted by cells in the pancreas called the islets of Langerhans.

In patients with diabetes mellitus, the islets cells are destroyed or non-functioning and produce no insulin. As a result, glucose builds up in the bloodstream. Uncontrol-

led diabetes can cause atherosclerosis, a blood vessel disease that destroys the kidneys, cause blindness and lead to amputation of lower limbs.

Diabetes mellitus usually strikes in childhood and the American Diabetes Association says there are about one million Americans with the disease.

In the experiment, Dr. Lacy and his co-workers used a drug to destroy islet cells in a group of laboratory mice. This turned the animals into

diabetics.

The researchers then mixed rat islet cells with a gel made from algae. Then the solution was then put into the hollow tubes, with each tube receiving 500 to 1,000 islet cells each. The tubes were implanted in the diabetic mice.

Blood sugar levels in 80 per cent of the mice quickly returned to normal and stayed there for the 60 days of the experiment. When the implants were removed, the

mice became diabetic again.

Dr. Lacy said his team now plans to test the technique on larger animals, such as dogs or monkeys. If these experiments are successful, then human trials could begin in about three years, he said.

Working with Dr. Lacy's Washington University team were scientists at Cytotherapeutics Inc. of Providence, Science, which published the study, is the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Steak knives replace scalpels for Brazil's alternative doctor

By Michael Stott
Reuters

ABADIANIA, Brazil — Ivo Pereira Correa stood against the whitewashed wall under a portrait of the Virgin Mary, eyes clenched tightly shut.

The man standing opposite him drew a pair of long scissors from a surgical tray and clamped a white swab in their tip. Suddenly, he rammed the scissors up Pereira's left nostril as far as they would go, twisting and turning them.

Pereira's face contorted in a silent grimace. Out came the scissors and a stream of blood poured on to the floor. Pereira slumped to the ground and was carried away.

"John of God," a Brazilian spiritual healer, had completed another operation.

"At the moment of the operation I am asleep," said the 46-year-old "doctor", whose real name is Joao Teixeira. "I am unconscious. I see nothing. The spirits perform the operation."

His methods may be unconventional — trances replace anaesthetic, steak knives substitute for scalpels and prayers are preferred to antiseptic — but there is no denying Teixeira's popularity.

Sick men and women flock

from as far afield as Peru and Ecuador to the simple, single-storey cluster of buildings where he works in Abadiania, a small town 120 kilometres from the capital, Brasilia.

"Joao is very well known in our country," said Anselmo Vargas Aguiar, from Aracaju, Pernambuco. "He once came and tried to practise there but the authorities would not let him. So we come here instead."

Teixeira, a plump man with long untidy hair, silver-rimmed glasses and white trousers, treats 2,500 people a day three days a week at his centre, free of charge.

When not operating on patients, he makes a living from a 2,500-acre (1,000-hectare) cattle ranch and an emerald dig.

His centre is dedicated to St. Ignatius of Loyola, the soldier who founded the Jesuit order of priests in the 16th century, although it has no link to the Jesuits other than Teixeira's claim to embody Loyola's healing spirit.

There is no shortage of patients who claim to be living proof that Teixeira's methods work.

"I first came here 12 years ago almost dead from liver cancer," said Ayrton Elias

Antares, a fit-looking retired army officer. "I weighed just 84 pounds (38.10 kg) and the doctors had sent me home from hospital to die. Within three months I was cured by Joao's invisible healing."

Sebastiao da Silva Lima, Teixeira's assistant, pointed proudly to a glass-fronted wooden cabinet in his dusty office. On its shelves stood a collection of sealed jam jars filled with rubbery-looking lumps floating in clear liquid.

"These are the cancers Joao has removed from his patients," Sebastiao said. "Each one has its own story and I look after them with great affection."

Treatment at the centre is

summary. All patients file through Teixeira's consulting room, decorated with red roses and religious icons and filled with white-robed praying mediums who, he says, "transmit energy to the patients during their spiritual

cleansing."

With barely a glance at each patient, Teixeira makes snap decisions. "You are cured. Go home," he tells a cripple, flinging his wooden crutches to the floor. The invalid shuffles off, looking surprised.

Some patients are told to return. Others receive immediate treatment, ranging from a simple laying on of hands to the steak knife.

A woman complains of an

eye ailment. Teixeira sits her in his chair and scrapes her eye with his knife. "Go home," he says, throwing the knife on to a nearby table. The woman staggers away, fluid streaming from her eye.

Teixeira said he started with his healing work at the age of 16 after seeing an apparition.

"It was seven or eight o'clock at night when the woman appeared to me. She was very pretty... A manifestation of a higher being,"

he said. "She called me to my mission."

Teixeira avoids any questioning about his diagnoses or methods of treatment. "I am not a doctor, I do not do anything," he repeats. "It is the centre which treats people."

But he insists he has never known a failure. "In 34 years of my mission this has never happened," he said. "If it had, you wouldn't see all these people here."

The Brazilian government officially condemns Teixeira's methods. Health Minister Alceu Guerra, himself a qualified doctor, said through his press office that the healer's "operations" were illegal.

But some in the ministry think differently.

"I know lots of people — including one colleague in this ministry — who've been cured by these operations," one source said.

1st animal model for Alzheimer's disease developed

By Catherine Arnst
Reuters

LONDON — For the first time a genetically modified mouse has been created that mimics all the characteristics of human Alzheimer's disease, medical researchers said.

Scientists have long been searching for a reliable animal model to test possible treatments for the progressive brain disorder, the biggest killer of people over the age of 65.

Researchers from Mount Sinai Medical Centre in New

York and Yamanouchi Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd of Tokyo reported in the science journal Nature that they were able successfully to insert into mouse embryos the human gene that is believed to cause the neurological changes seen in Alzheimer's victims.

The mice that resulted developed all the telltale lesions in the brain characteristic of late stages of the disease, including plaques, tangles and massive nerve cell death.

Although other genetically engineered mouse models for some symptoms of the disease have been developed,

medical experts said the Mount Sinai animal was the most useful yet created.

"The result brings us a step closer to our major goal, to fundamentally alter the course of the disease by the end of the decade," said Dr. Gene Cohen, acting director of the National Institute on Ageing, a division of the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

"If we can delay the onset of Alzheimer's by five years

we could cut the incidence of the disease by 50 per cent," he said.

Alzheimer's is one of the most frightening diseases facing the elderly because there is no known cure, nor a cause other than the inherited genetic flaw found in about 10 per cent of sufferers.

It is also impossible accurately to diagnose Alzheimer's until the victim is dead and an autopsy can be conducted,

making it an extremely difficult condition to study.

The disease slowly brings on an irreversible loss of memory and reasoning, progressively leading from senility to loss of control of all body functions to death.

Approximately four million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's, with 250,000 victims diagnosed each year. The incidence of the disease

increases dramatically with age, affecting about 30 per cent of people over 80.

Dr. Jon Gordon who headed the research team, said the mouse model would enable scientists to study the evolution of the brain abnormalities at the cellular level, giving scientists better clues as to what their targets should be in developing a drug treatment.

Study indicates possible genetic role in homosexuality

By Brenda C. Coleman
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — A study of twins suggests that homosexuality has a genetic or biological basis, adding to arguments that sexual orientation doesn't result from maladjustment or moral defect.

"We found 52 per cent of identical twin brothers of gay men also were gay, compared with 22 per cent of fraternal twins, compared with 11 per cent of genetically unrelated (adoptive) brothers," said J. Michael Bailey, assistant professor of psychology at Northwestern University in Evanston.

"Which is exactly the kind of pattern you would want to see if something genetic were going on," he said Saturday.

An earlier study reported brain cell cluster traits that indicated homosexuality could have a biological trigger.

The latest study, published in the December issue of the Archives of General Psychiatry, examined 56 identical twins, 54 fraternal twins and 57 adoptive brothers.

Identical twins are genetic clones, developed from a single egg that split after being fertilised by a single sperm. Fraternal twins develop simultaneously from two separate eggs fertilised by two separate sperm, making

them only as similar as non-twin siblings.

Adoptive brothers, of course, have no genes in common.

"The degree of the genetic contribution (to homosexuality) could range from 30 per cent to over 70 per cent," Prof. Bailey said, "depending on the assumptions used about how common homosexuality is ... and how representative our sample was of twins in the general population."

Prof. Bailey and his co-author, Dr. Richard C. Pillard, a psychiatry professor at Boston University School of Medicine, recruited their subjects through ads in homosexual publications in

Chicago, other midwestern cities and southwestern cities.

Gregory Carey, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Colorado at Boulder, called the work "very important research."

"I'm not terribly surprised at the conclusions," Prof. Carey said. "Some of the earlier evidence suggested there was genetic effect, but the studies were not well done. This is something that really sort of clinches it."

He added, however, that social conditioning still may be very important.

"We inherit predispositions to behaviour. Nature has a great deal to do with it," he said.

Mental illness diagnosis through the face

By Harald Wessendanger

TÜBINGEN doctors have developed a device that measures human facial gestures automatically. The device is designed to make possible an exact diagnosis of mental illness. The patient is shown a succession of film scenes: Loret, the comedian, with a piece of spaghetti on his face, clumsily telling the woman he adores in Odipussi that he loves her; the Love Story tale of true love and impending separation by cancer; Shirley MacLaine and Jack Nicholson in a scene from Time for Tenderness.

The patient is a young girl, the scene is the basement of Tübingen University Hospital's psychiatric clinic. Is she sad and happy as she might be expected to be? Is she uninterested or even bored? An unskilled observer would not be much the wiser from following her facial gestures. But the new mimicry measurement system she is helping to test has no difficulty.

Professor Hans Heimann, 68, head of the clinic, has

long been fascinated by the idea of precise and independent measurement of facial gestures as a mirror image of the mind. Motor disturbances, especially of the facial muscles, have long been thought to be symptomatic of mental illness, but there has so far been a lack of techniques by which to measure them exactly and independently.

Under Professor Heimann's aegis a computer-aided device has been designed and built in Tübingen. It has taken four years to develop and successfully test.

It was invented by biologist Waldemar Himer, 45, and combines an optical system that reflects infra-red light and a scanner with a special control device. The girl sits opposite this device as she watches the film scenes on the screen. Small white dots of reflecting foil 2.5mm in diameter have been arranged evenly and symmetrically all over her face. She wears a metal band on her forehead to which more white dots have been fixed. These reference points are used to check

effects triggered by movements of her head and body.

A special camera scans her face at a speed of 10 frames per second and transfers it substantially enlarged to a video tape. The screen resolution is 2,048 by 1,024 dots per inch. The slightest movement of every dot in her face is automatically recorded, and registered independently of subjective impressions that might be gained by a human observer.

The device passed its initial tests at the Tübingen clinic with flying colours. Professor Heimann's assistant, Dr. Frank Schneider, 33, used it to compare the mimicry of 20 schizophrenic, 20 depressive and 20 healthy patients. He glued four reference points in the faces of each patient or volunteer, two each at the corners of their mouths and at the inner ends of their eyebrows.

He showed them an amusing and a depressing film and then talked with them about how they had felt as they watched them. Dr. Schneider

found that the facial movements of all three groups were the same in number. But the facial expression of depressives and healthy people is more "unmoved" when they are subjected to negative impressions, whereas the mimicry of schizophrenics tends to be stereotyped.

Emotionally positive or negative conditions made no difference. In both groups of patients the upper half of the face was found to be minimally more immobile. The technique can be used to find out how psychopharmacological and other drugs affect mimicry, thereby objectively registering side-effects on the mimicry system. Dr. Schneider also hopes to arrive at new means of assessing competing products.

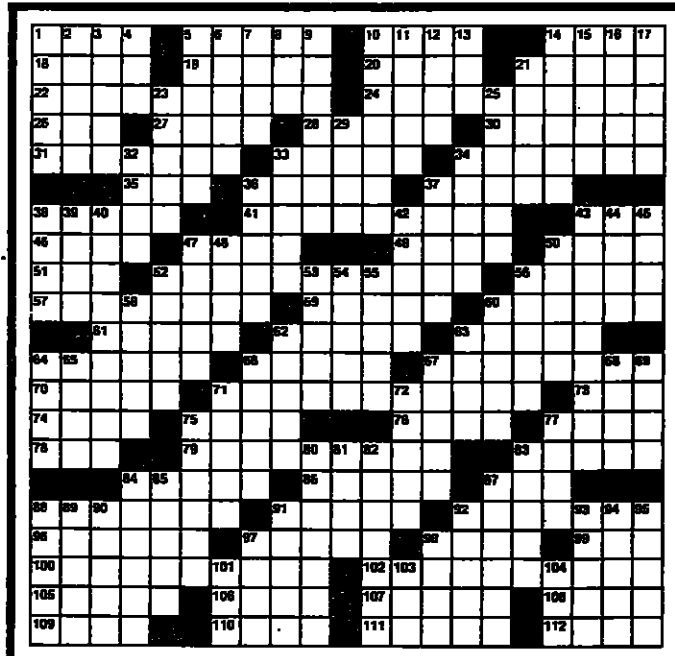
The Tübingen work group is now testing 160 patients to see what changes the mimicry of schizophrenics undergoes as they are treated. The new technique may reveal, in their facial gestures, gradual improvements that used to be hard to quantify objectively. — Frankfurter Neue Presse

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

GALLICISMS
By Norma Steinberg

ACROSS

- 1 Texas town
- 5 Of the trade
- 10 Pile
- 14 Asset
- 18 At a distance
- 19 Noun's nursing mate
- 20 Ms Fitzgerald
- 21 By oneself
- 22 Writer's pseudonym
- 24 Artists in the forefront
- 26 Word on a bill
- 27 Mimics
- 28 — Alvin
- 30 Fell in drops
- 31 Reputed
- 33 Orchestra section
- 34 Diving flaps
- 35 Old-timer
- 36 C & W singer
- 37 Very hard quart
- 38 Longhorn
- 41 In the bull
- 43 Alphabet run
- 45 Art's followers
- 47 Wine word
- 49 Bunk and
- 50 Overcharge
- 51 Payment on savings
- 52 Season for
- 53 Reason for
- 54 Cheesecake
- 57 Discrepancy
- 59 Gutter Palmer
- 60 Cried sharply
- 61 Cosmetologist
- 62 Sales pitch
- 63 Sharpener
- 64 Attack
- 65 See-through
- 67 Kin of
- 70 Like a peacock
- 71 Carriage
- 72 Surreal
- 73 Surreal
- 74 Dry
- 75 Fever and chills
- 76 Twink and
- 77 Bundle of joy
- 78 Numerical abbr.
- 79 New Orleans
- 83 Bathing suit material
- 84 Sprite
- 85 Climb
- 87 Gas station mess
- 88 Attack
- 89 Attack
- 91 Post Ezra
- 92 Demand state
- 95 Incomplete
- 97 Mt. gipsy
- 98 Crying head
- 99 Previous to
- 100 Certain restaurant
- 102 Museum places
- 103 Lubricated
- 104 — even knot
- 105 — leave it
- 107 —
- 108 "Take — leave it"
- 109 "Rosebud"
- 110 — by comparison
- 111 — while
- 112 — Also, CA



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Fussy militant feminist made a sturdy case for feminism to a lady.
2. Nice capable baker makes perfect Boston cream pie for best pal.
3. Dog, in fog, finds and bites last lost bag behind log in bog.
4. Loud mouths usually produce fatuous echoes from empty heads.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. JK OXCMJ C ICIKJS JLZZ AE JK OXCMJ C
GFJFLZ HLZZPZ CMQ C HXAEFGX PKMZ
KG ESCQZ GLKJ JSZ EFM. —By Gordon Miller

2. MLXPPM MRYUNE SNAAY "MUFFZY"
OILHY, RXP EFN YFTN, RY UNPEFY ULY
YOINNKN GEFT BMNXHS GLGHU GAFFE. —By Ed Haddock

3. JUGONIM EGIRNZ HIADU SNZ JDY EGAD
SHIM VPDU JGUNZSNVIDU ZV PDUO
HIDGZO SD YDJR. —By Rita Salvato

4. JXSNBSJ LKHWCDST DMRSE EBN
EHLK CY ETCRSY MHWCDMSJ WSXST
MW ETYLA EMYR. —By Earl Ireland



Diagramless 18 X 19, By Craig Schultz

ACROSS

- 1 Change into money
- 5 Concoiled
- 8 Native dance
- 9 Wists
- 11 Ireland
- 12 Small bird
- 13 Zesty flavor
- 14 Northwandering
- 16 Decentful, cunning ways
- 20 Staring remark
- 22 Defendant's answer
- 23 Japanese
- 24 Winter vehicle
- 25 Horse's pace
- 26 — off (angry)
- 33 Certain residence
- 34 Artery
- 35 Lustrous fabric
- 36 Des — IA
- 37 "Witch" town
- 52 Given a PG or an R
- 53 Food container
- 54 Snake
- 55 Term of address
- 56 The majority
- 57 Murphy's law
- 58 Father's land
- 59 "The — the Game"
- 60 Prizing measures
- 62 Indian
- 63 Article
- 64 Sets in a surrounding mass
- 62 Toledo's lake
- 63 The self
- 64 In a way not
- 65 Pie — mode
- 66 Child's game
- 67 Tides off the top
- 68 Great anger
- 69 Disparaging
- 70 Popular acclaim
- 71 City of Asia Minor
- 72 Long walk
- 73 Single
- 74 Leap slowly
- 75 Dispatched

Freedom of information

(Continued from page 4)

After a long interview given to Arop Madut Arop by the SPLA leader, John Garang. Shortly after the June 1989 coup, the first part of the interview, by now translated into Arabic, was reproduced in Al Sudan Al Hadith newspaper.

Publication of the second part of the interview was stopped. Arop Madut Arop's arrest is thought to have been related to the government's disapproval of the article.

Journalists in Turkey are frequently targeted for abuse while pursuing their professional activities. In September 1991 the Turkish Press Council reported that during the first eight months of the year 44 journalists had been physically assaulted, in most cases by state employees, including police officers. AI has received numerous reports of journalists being tortured in police custody in Turkey.

In March 1991, eight journalists working for the weekly political review, Yazall (Century), were arrested in Ankara and charged with membership of the Kurdish Workers Party, an illegal organisation. While detained they were blindfolded and interrogated about their sources for articles they had written about the Kurdish conflict in the south-east of Turkey. Some were tortured: one said he was stripped naked, suspended by the wrists, and given electric shocks.

The main charges against the eight were soon dropped but they continue to stand trial for alleged possession of firearms which they say they obtained for their per-

sonal protection after receiving anonymous death threats.

Journalists and writers working in countries where governments face civil unrest have been particularly targets for the authorities. In China many writers who supported the 1989 pro-democracy movement have been imprisoned.

Li Guiren, editor-in-chief of the Hua Yue Literature and Art Publishing House in Shaanxi Province, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment by a court in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, in March 1991 for activities relating to the pro-democracy protests in June 1989.

During 1989 Li Guiren had written and published a preface to a collection of essays by the exiled Chinese dissident writer, Liu Binyan. When martial law was declared on May 20, 1989, Li Guiren sent a telegram to Zhao Ziyang, then general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, urging that the People's Liberation Army not be used against demonstrators. He reportedly received a copy of this telegram on a wall of the Hua Yue building.

Li Guiren was charged with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement." His trial began in March 1990 in the Xi'an Intermediate People's Court. The sentence was announced a year later. At his trial Li Guiren maintained his innocence of the charges. He quoted from articles of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, which state that in China people enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration.

In Kuwait, Osamah Suhail Hussain, a Palestinian, was sentenced to death by the Martial Law Court in mid-June 1991, after an unfair trial which did not conform to international standards.

Osamah Suhail Hussain and 23 others were accused of "collaboration with the Iraqi authorities" because they continued to work for the newspaper, Al Nida', during the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. A Kuwaiti newspaper, Al Qabas, was taken over by the Iraqi authorities and renamed Al Nida' shortly after the Iraqi invasion in August 1990. It was the only newspaper allowed to publish during the occupation.

At the trial, the identity of the chief prosecution witnesses was concealed and the defence was not allowed to cross-examine them. Trial documents presented to the court were not made available to the defendants or to their lawyers.

Osamah Suhail Hussain was reportedly tortured with electric shocks, beatings and cigarette burns. On June 26, his sentence was committed to life imprisonment. He is currently being held at Kuwait Central Prison.

Journalists and writers who persist in publishing information their governments would prefer to conceal risk detention, imprisonment, torture, and in some cases death.

The struggle for human rights depends to a large extent on the free flow of information and often, therefore, on the courage and commitment of journalists and writers. Those who become victims of human rights violations because of their efforts to expose violations by governments deserve the full support of the international human rights movements. — Amnesty International.

By David Osborne

TWO large advertising boardings cheer up the otherwise depressing departure hall at Brussels Airport. One is for The Economist magazine and states simply, without illustration, "European spoken here." The other is for a swanky-looking Japanese sports car. Its message reads: "Cars for a country called Europe."

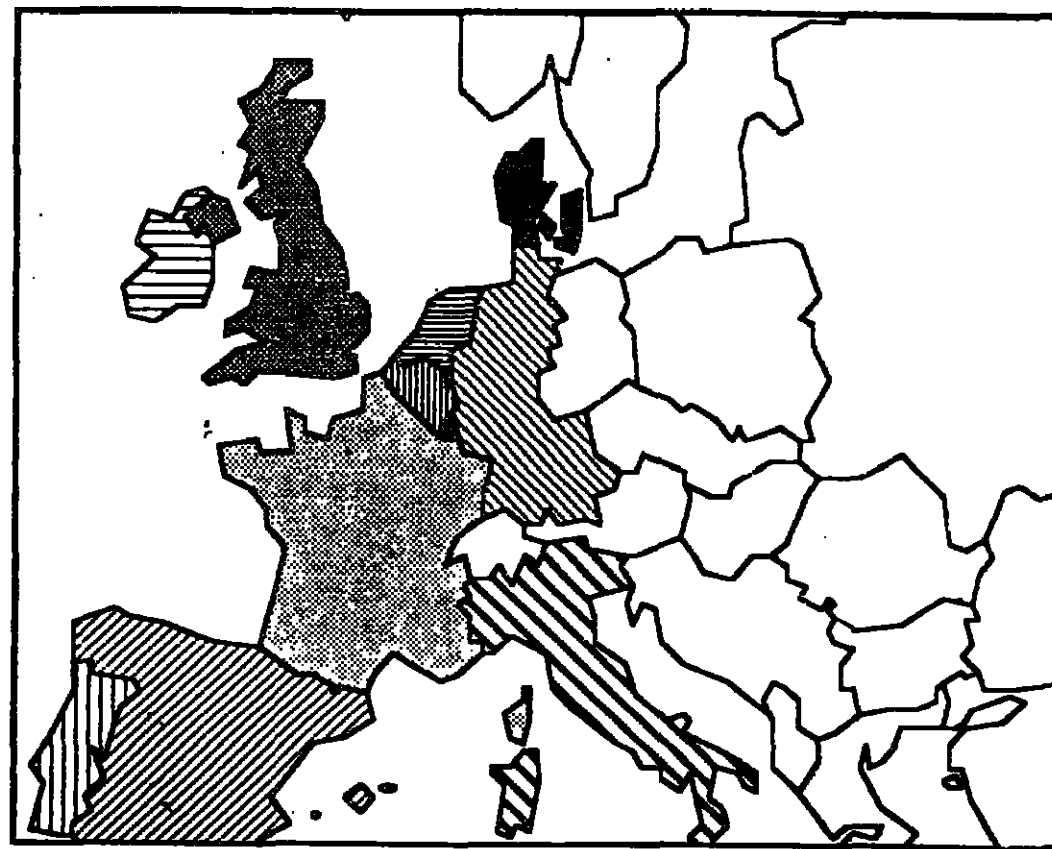
Leaving Brussels this weekend after seven years covering the European Community — five as correspondent for The Independent — I glanced up at them for a last time and wondered. Are these the flippant imaginings of advertising copywriters, or does a recognisable European identity exist?

Like many who have watched the community blossom over recent years, I would like to believe that it does. Though its rhetoric is sometimes foolish, the ideals espoused by the community — the spread of peace, democracy and prosperity within and beyond its borders — are surely unanswerable.

Feeling such commitment does not mean wanting also to build a United States of Europe, submerging all national identities. That is believed only by a handful of ardent European federalists — mostly Tory politicians — in Britain. What we are looking for is a community where member countries can each retain a sense of being a nation, guarding all their traditions and responsible for government best done at the national level, while coalescing where it is most useful for them to do so, for instance in monetary policy. This was the inspiration of the 1957 Treaty of Rome and it was reinforced again at the Maastricht summit.

Just a few times during my stay in Brussels I have sensed, with a surge of inner excitement, that the community is suddenly not far from coming of age. This has had nothing to do with breakthroughs, saying in fixing price levels for Highland sheep meat or overcoming 12 years of deadlock in common standards for pressure boilers. Such events, the everyday life of Brussels, do not bring inspiration. It was rather those moments when the spirit of the community, as a force in its own right suddenly became visible. I remember in mid-1985 Lord Cockfield, then senior British EC commissioner, presenting his proposals to create the 1992 single market and it dawned on us, the journalists, that he meant business. Then in the summer of 1988 the "twelve" took the momentous step of lowering all barriers to the free movement of capital and a month later, at the Madrid summit, the heads of government agreed to negotiate a treaty for a single

The flowering of Europe



currency. And there was the speech by James Baker, the U.S. Secretary of State in Berlin in December 1989, giving an American stamp of approval for political integration in Europe. Finally, this summer, it seemed a big step forward when the community sent ceasefire monitors to Yugoslavia and proposals for an EC peacekeeping force were being mooted — although since then, the community's intervention has not always seemed productive.

The recent story of the community has been of transformation from an organisation of paralyzing self-doubt into one of confidence and boldness. The change can be traced to the appointment, in January 1985, of Jacques Delors as EC commission president. Taking advantage particularly of improved economic times across Europe, Mr. Delors, aided notably by François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl, has since propelled the community forward. With Lord Cockfield, who remained Britain's senior Commissioner to 1988, Mr. Delors launched the "1992" programme for a united single market. Industry applauded; even Britain under Margaret Thatcher pledged its support. The market will be in place by January 1993 — 1992 was always a misnomer — though political compromise has meant it will not be as complete as Lord Cockfield intended.

In 1986, the "twelve" — Spain and Portugal had just joined — accelerated the pace of integration by signing the Single European Act, the prime purpose of which was to introduce majority voting for legislation relevant to

the 1992 drive. And more recently, of course, the "twelve" have pushed forward again, in spite of British reticence, to the signing in Maastricht of the Treaty for European Union.

All these changes have both been born of, and reinforced, the community's new confidence. When the Maastricht summit reached agreement in the early hours of Dec. 11, the Atlanta-based CNN television network began its news bulletin in unequivocal style. "Stand aside Japan and America, a new empire is born. In the small Dutch town of Maastricht last night, European leaders agreed..." This was exaggerated, but the American network can be forgiven a little news-making licence. The United States and much of the rest of the world have, for a while now, been sitting up and taking notice of the community.

This is especially true of eastern Europe. If the community still does not inspire affection in London or Manchester, it apparently does in Prague and Warsaw. It cannot be a bad reflection on the community that so many of its neighbours — both the newly liberated states of central Europe and more prosperous countries such as Sweden and Austria — are so anxious to join it. I will long remember accompanying Frans Andriessen, the EC Foreign Affairs commissioner, to Budapest last year to open an office of the European Commission. It was as if Hungary had already been asked to take full membership. A reception for 600

was held in the city's Ethnographic Museum, with candelabras and a string orchestra. Jozsef Antall, the Hungarian prime minister, gave a lengthy address, a huge EC flag hanging grandly behind him.

So what of symbols? That flag, 12 gold stars against a blue background, was launched by Mr. Delors to a hoard of bussed-in schoolchildren outside the commission headquarters one blustery spring day in 1957. Mr. Delors believed that if community was to have a personality, it must have some of the paraphernalia of a nation state. The flag now flutters all over the community, with only the British being slow to espouse it.

Some of the symbols are still missing, however. Mr. Delors has no Downing Street or White House as an official residence, but lives in an apartment on the outskirts of Brussels. Nor does he have any EC aircraft at his disposal for his many journeys. He must travel on scheduled flights or hire an air taxi.

These are trifling shortcomings, though, for there are many much more fundamental challenges facing the community. One relates to that appetite of its neighbours to take full membership. In her Bruges speech of September 1988, Mrs. Thatcher accused Brussels of many things. One of her charges was right on target and hurt. Europe, she pointed out, was not the preserve of the community. It was the whole of the land mass, and Brussels should not be allowed to

forget it. Three years later, nobody in the community believes enlargement is not imminent. Mr. Delors has predicted a membership of 20 to 25.

It is not clear how the present momentum of integration could be maintained with up to 15 new member states, all bringing a still wider variety of cultures and economic difficulties. An immediate answer would be a still greater centralisation of power in those policy areas where action would be taken together, particularly through ever more majority voting. Would this be acceptable, for instance, to London? Another possible solution is a community of so-called "variable geometry," with member states participating in some policy areas and not others. A precedent may have been set here at Maastricht, where 11 members were driven to pursuing further harmonisation of social legislation without Britain. But this would be a multi-speed community that could never be truly whole.

Even before enlargement, however, the performance of the "twelve" gives cause for concern, especially in foreign policy. In this respect, the community has been at its most impressive in its response to the Yugoslav war. No one else, least of all the Americans, has been willing to tackle the crisis head-on, and at times the dogged efforts of the community at least to keep the lid on the violence has been noble.

But the saga has also provided evidence of the limits of community solidarity. It was dispiriting to see Germany foisting its own desire to recognise the breakaway Yugoslav republics on to its reluctant community partners.

The next few years will be critical. The Maastricht treaty offers the community the chance to develop its integrationist ambitions. There is a danger, however, that the momentum could be slowed or even reversed. Under the treaty, member states have opted to pursue foreign and also home affairs policy on a largely inter-governmental basis, outside the normal decision-making procedures. If new pressures, particularly the imperative of taking in 10 or more new members, become too great, that trend away from the model provided by the treaty of Rome could dominate.

Meanwhile, the leaders who have fought for the European deal — Mr. Kohl and Mr. Mitterrand especially — will no longer be around. Mr. Delors, who has ambitions for the French presidency, cannot remain in Brussels for ever.

What will the ads at Brussels airport say in a few years' time? Will Europe have become a selling point even in Britain by then? Or will the boarding be for a car "made for a country called Belgium"? — The Independent.

Taba — a land in between

By Jack Redden
Reuters

TABA, EGYPT — The hotel has both Egyptian and Israeli phone numbers, water and electricity flow from both sides. Umbrellas on the Egyptian beach carry Hebrew writing and guests from both countries lie around the pool.

Nearly three years after the few hundred metres of bitterly disputed sand and rock that is Taba were returned to Egypt by Israel, the tiny strip remains in a sort of no-man's land not fully part of either country.

Egyptian forces man checkpoints on both sides of Taba, charging a tax for visitors who want to go further into the Sinai Peninsula than the 13-storey beach hotel — formerly the Israeli-owned Sonesta and now the Taba Hilton controlled by the government in Cairo.

"I see things from the Israeli angle, the Egyptian angle, the hotel's viewpoint," said Neil Mathieson, the English manager of the hotel that occupies most of Taba.

Outside his window the flags of the two countries flapped over the border crossing and an Israeli patrol boat from the nearby resort town of Eilat bobbed in the Red Sea waters at the spot where Egyptian territory begins.

The protracted battle over Taba, which Israel had refused to return after agreeing to leave Sinai under the 1979 peace treaty with Egypt, contributed to what Israelis complain is a "cold peace" with its southern neighbour.

Israel refused to recognise the border that had existed before it captured the Sinai in the 1967 war, even building the hotel in the disputed area two years after the peace treaty with Egypt.

The argument dragged on for years, poisoning the atmosphere between the countries, until it finally went to international

arbitration at the end of 1986. The five judges found in Egypt's favour and a reluctant Israel finally withdrew on March 15, 1989 — a decade after the treaty.

The mutual suspicions remain. Israelis, who initially disappeared from the hotel guest lists, are returning. But some still object to the return of Sinai and those arriving at the hotel for the first time under the new ownership look about nervously, unused to being in an Arab country.

"On the Israeli side, we have some who work well, cooperate," said one hotel employee. "But we have a lot who have a problem with us."

Arabs and Israelis meeting in the hotel can remove some tension, he said, but it can also backfire. Hard-pushing Israelis and easy-going Egyptians do not make a smooth cultural mix.

An Egyptian doctor said he went to the hotel to see Israelis, whom he repeatedly described as "aggressive," and to understand why they had fought so hard to keep the barren plot of land.

For the 344-room hotel, balancing the Israeli and Egyptian interests of Taba is a financial necessity. Israelis have again become the largest group of visitors, followed by Egyptians and Europeans.

Inside the hotel, the old and new nationalities mix. Only the outline of the Mezzuzas, Jewish religious symbols, remain on the door-frames to each room but the hotel wine list comes inside a cover printed in Hebrew and English.

The Italian restaurant displays a large "non-kosher" sign outside to warn off religious Jews but serves a wide selection of Israeli wines along with the shrimps banned under Jewish dietary laws.

At a lecture on a nearby area of spectacular rock erosion, which the hotel hopes will become a national park, a Swiss questioner is advised to find a map in Eilat.



Egyptians raise their flag at Taba, in Sinai, after Israel transferred sovereignty at the end of 1986

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Magic, Maradona overshadow all else

By Brian Trusdell
The Associated Press

PERSONAL tragedy overshadowed individual excellence or team triumph in 1991 with two of the world's true mega stars brought down by disease and drugs.

Long standing barriers fell — from Bob Beamon's seemingly invincible long-jump record to South Africa's banishment from international sports. But Diego Maradona's fall from grace after his suspension from soccer and arrest for cocaine, and Magic Johnson's stunning announcement that he had the AIDS virus appeared to garner the most attention.

Former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson's indictment on a charge of raping a Miss Black America beauty pageant contestant in Indianapolis and America's all-time winningest jockey Bill Shoemaker's paralysis from a car accident also tainted the year in sports.

The year started with Maradona's problems. The Argentine of Italian first-division club Napoli had a season of tangles with his team and fans that started as far back as the 1990 World Cup. Napoli was slipping in the Italian League; it was eliminated from the European Champions Cup and more pressure and attention was added when gov-

ernment prosecutors linked him in February with a drug and prostitution ring in the Naples area.

But that was a mere annoyance compared to April 6, when Maradona was suspended by the Italian League for 15 months for testing positive for cocaine following a March 17 game against Bari, a ban in force world wide.

He returned to Argentina, but on April 26 he was arrested in a Buenos Aires apartment for cocaine possession. He was convicted in absentia in the Italian case but given a suspended sentence. The Argentina charges are still pending.

Tyson's biggest problem lies ahead — a Jan. 27 trial and a possible 63 years in prison. The rape charge eventually cancelled his long-awaited bid to regain the heavyweight title. He was to have fought Evander Holyfield for the belt on Nov. 8, but a rib injury forced a delay. Because a suitable replacement date couldn't be found between Tyson's recovery and the start of his trial, the bout was called off.

But the biggest shocker was Johnson's. Unlike the oft-moody Maradona, Johnson was the smiling world ambassador of professional basketball. When the three-time NBA MVP (most valuable player) announced on Nov. 7 that he was retiring because he had the AIDS virus, the world took notice.

It put AIDS back on the front pages and stories appeared about the temptations offered athletes at every turn.

He said he would become a spokesman for AIDS education and will be in Barcelona, Spain next summer to lead the first NBA All-Star squad into the Olympics.

In Barcelona, Johnson will have to share headlines with South Africa, expected to return to the Olympic community after 32 years.

With all major apartheid laws removed and South Africa President F.W. de Klerk's vow to share power with the country's black majority, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), readmitted the country on July 9, ending its official ban from the IOC after 21 years.

South Africa already has broken the sports boycott, starting with a fall cricket tour of India approved by the International Cricket Council and the ATP tour's rescheduling of its season-ending doubles championships to Johannesburg.

In December, the United Nations ended its formal sports boycott.

On the field, the third IAAF world championships for athletics in Tokyo produced more big stories than any other event. Mike Powell broke the sport's longest-standing record — Beamon's 8.90-meter (29 feet) long jump from the 1968 Olympics.

In a duel with fellow American Carl Lewis, who had the greatest series of jumps, Powell had one spectacular lead — 8.95 (29.1 feet).

And while Lewis lost the event, his effort was part of a legendary performance at the world championships.

Lewis had three jumps over 29 feet, anchored the 400-meter U.S. relay team to a world record time of 37.50 and earned the title of the world's fastest human with a world record 9.86-second run in the 100 meters.

Also at the world championships, Katrin Krabbe was the only individual double gold medalist, winning both the 100 and 200 metres, but did not lead an expected windfall of medals for the newly united German team.

Sergei Bubka's performance at the world championships was anticlimactic. He already had raised the pole vault record eight times in 1991 — four indoor and four outdoor — becoming the first man to go over 20 feet. He won the world championship gold with a vault of 19 feet, but was one jump short of finishing sixth.

Soccer officials continued to try to increase scoring — without much success. The professional foul rule, ejecting players who foul opponents in clear goal-scoring opportunities, only resulted in ejections, not goals, and in angering coaches and players.

The efforts got a boost when

Red Star Belgrade won the European Champions Cup over Olympique Marseille on penalty kicks and then admitted it played defensively to force the tiebreaker.

Fan deaths continued to mar the sport. Forty-two people died after being crushed in Orkney, South Africa following a goal in a game between the Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates. In South America, 10 peoples were killed and 128 injured in Santiago celebrations after Colo Colo became the first Chilean team to win the Libertadores Cup.

This occurred the same year Manchester United won the European Cup Winners Cup to cap England's first season back into Europe after a six-year ban. It also was the year that Liverpool, the team whose fans caused the ban, returned to the continent.

Argentina won its first Copa America since 1958 with Gabriel Batistuta replacing Maradona, and the United States made its first start in international play as Bora Milutinovic coached it to a Concacaf gold cup title. Michelle Akers-Stahl led the Americans to the first women's world cup title.

In tennis, Monica Seles won her version of the Grand Slam that didn't include Wimbledon. After winning the Australian and French Opens, Seles pulled out of the grass-court event claiming injury in a minor, yet unspecified, incident. Rumours abounded, including one that she was pre-

gnant. She later claimed shin splints and a stress fracture.

She went on to win the U.S. Open and the Virginia Slims championships, but because of her refusal to play in Federation Cup — another shin splints claim was rejected by the International Tennis Federation — she won't be playing at the Olympics.

Joining Seles in the headlines was Jimmy Connors, who despite not winning a single tournament caused a sensation by reaching the third round at Roland Garros and the semifinals at Flushing Meadows at age 39.

Meanwhile, Ayrton Senna won his third world driving title while Ferrari went without a Grand Prix victory for only the third time in the last 21 years. In the United States, Michael Andretti followed in his famous father's footsteps by winning the Indy-car title.

Australia dethroned Pacific neighbour New Zealand as king of Rugby Union, beating the all blacks in the semifinals of the world cup in Britain and then defeating five nations camp English on their home ground of Twickenham.

Marc Girardelli won a record-breaking fourth overall world cup title but Alpine skiing lost two of its own in 1991. Austrian Gernot Reinstadler was killed in a Jan. 18 qualifying run crash and former world cup champion Rudolph Nierlich, also of Austria, died in a May automobile accident.

JORDAN BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Excitement, surprise and tight competition characterized the first division basketball championship in the final week of 1991 as the event came closer to its end with only six matches left.

On Monday Al Hussein scored a most convincing victory over Al Watani thus asserting themselves as leaders of the second group, as they held on to their fifth position in the overall standings losing only to the top four teams.

Al Hussein played with teamwork and determination unlike Al Watani winning the first half 37-24 and went on to win the match 70-45.

With this loss, Al Watani finished sixth, barely ahead of the two relegated teams, Al Ashrafieh and Al Karak.

On Sunday, Al Orthodoxi came a step closer to snatching the title away when they beat titleholders Al Ahli in an interesting and competitive match at the Sports Palace court in Amman.

Al Ahli, feeling the pressure of retaining the title, led from the beginning ending the first half 36-31.

Al Ahli continued to lead 42-35 and 44-39 in the fifth minute of the second half and played a fast attacking game led by Yousef Zaghloul and Samir Murqus.

Al Orthodoxi changed their defence tactics to a zone defence to secure their rebounding while tightening their defence to lessen Al Ahli's scoring. This dramatically changed the game to Al Orthodoxi's advantage, winning 73-64.

Commenting on the match in a statement to the Jordan Times, Al Orthodoxi's head coach Mohammad Al Najjar said: "This match was totally different from the last one (when Al Orthodoxi beat Al Ahli 74-60 two weeks ago)."

"We led from the beginning of that match and Al Ahli felt they had to win (being titleholders) even without Naser Bushnaq. We on the other hand felt less pressure and were ready to face the challenge since we've been preparing for it. We won with a 14 point difference."

"Al Ahli played this match at their own pace and had clearly benefitted from their matches in Beirut," Najjar said.

"Our change of defence tactics to a 1-2-2 zone defence effectively stopped their fast play as our defence became more difficult to penetrate, and we secured our defensive rebounding while Al Ahli were not successful in scoring, as we gained the lead."

"I had no doubt whatsoever that we would win the match. We were prepared for any situation," Najjar added.

On the next Ahli-Orthodoxi match set for Jan. 23, he said: "We will be ready. But we should not underestimate Al Ahli. Our playmaker (Jihad Saliba) who missed this last game because of injury will hopefully play."

"I expect the next match to be much more exciting." In the other Sunday match, Al Jazireh failed to keep their 46-45 first half lead over Al Jalil in the clash which decided third and fourth places.

Although Al Jazireh had a 69-66 lead, Al Jalil caught-up and won 82-76.

Al Karak meanwhile scored their first and only victory when they beat Al Ashrafieh 57-56.

Had Al Ashrafieh won the match they would have had to play a match against Al Watani to decide which team would be relegated to Al Karak. But Al Ashrafieh failed to score the vital win.

In the upcoming matches Al Jazireh will play Al Orthodoxi Thursday at the Sports Palace court while Al Jalil will play Al Ahli at Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANNAH HIRSCH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AKQ 76 ♣QJ10643 ♦J53
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one heart. What action do you take?

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AKQ 76 ♣QJ10643 ♦J53
The bidding has proceeded:
East South West North
1♥ 2♦ Pass 3♦
Pass ?
What action do you take?

Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AKQ 76 ♣AJ5 ♦AJ7543
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1♦ 2♥ Pass 3♥
Pass ?
What action do you take?

Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South

you hold:
♠AJ4 7EJ ♣AQ98762 ♦10
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
Pass Pass 1♦ 2♥
2♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AKQJ83 ♣94 ♦A873
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
4♦ Pass Pass ?
What action do you take?

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AK742 ♣A105 ♦A76 ♦K5
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1♠ 2♥ Pass 2♠
Pass ?
What do you bid now?

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JANUARY 3, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A new appraisal of all the work activity you are handling at the present time, can be very good for you and bring increased success. At the same time you may want to consider your health and attain a greater degree of well being.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Today is time for action in whatever realm of your existence brings you both happiness and the feeling that you are really accomplishing something.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can get your family to do almost anything that you wish with a smile and an intelligent argument so get in right with them in such fashion.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You now have some interesting means by which to gain the good will of those with whom you have an alliance of a routine or daily nature.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You now find you have the right means by which to gain the good will of some financially secure person who feels well disposed towards you.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is the time for you to do most anything you wish and especially those plans of a well rounded nature that are highly personal in design.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Now you are able to quietly organize your efforts towards a big

breakthrough in gaining your intimate desires and showing devotion to attachment.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A interesting and generous friend who is sure if himself will give you some excellent pointers now how to gain your hopes and wishes easier.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) It is up to you now to go directly to that official or executive who has any control whatever over the things you seek so state what you want.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have a brilliant idea, how you can deepen your knowledge, add to your character, gain new friends of fascinating persons and you make your mark.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You now are able to see pretty clearly what is best for you in attending to those promises you have made in a very meticulous fashion.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is your day to get together with any and all available associates to discuss and thresh out with them where you are headed in the future.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Now you can certainly get at that working facing you and do it in a most interesting manner and can get fellow workers to go along with your ideas.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY JANUARY 2, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Use the afternoon and evening to review and reconsider previous viewpoints but don't let anyone put you in a situation where issues are forced or where you must make an immediate decision. Be gentle but firm.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You have all kinds of opportunities to have a pleasant time or to make some arrangements of a recreational nature today but tonight avoid any harsh conditions.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is your time to make sure that you do please those who also dwell beneath the same roof as you, then tonight avoid any argument whatever with family.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is your time to do what pleases those with whom you have usual contact and who such as you in building up happiness, then tonight avoid contentions.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is your time to show you are the one who is financially able and wise to you can have more money but tonight requires economy on your part.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You have a highly interesting means by which to gain the good will of personal contacts and especially if you entertain and are at parties with them.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you want to please your

friend man you would be wise to do so quietly and without a lot of ado, praise and tonight you can rid yourself of problems.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Friends can be very helpful to you today but tonight you pay the piper if you in anyway take chances or do what takes from your financial security.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is the moment when you find that most everyone is thinking in terms of how they can get ahead in the world of action but you can make the most progress.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Whatever you would like to do that necessitates some new and fresh approach at gaining the goodwill of wise, intelligent persons in line.

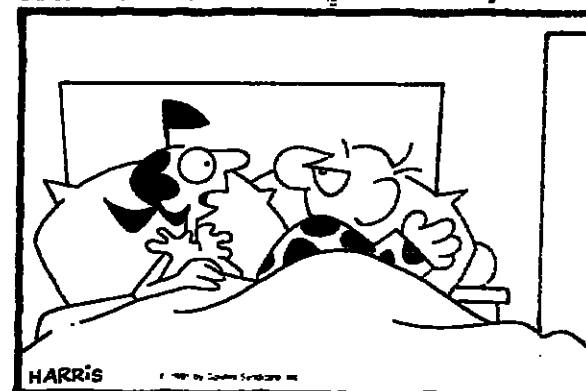
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Stick to working out those obligations that have you behind the eight ball and then tonight do nothing to which your attachment can resent.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can reach that desirable accord with a brilliant partner that has been missing for awhile but tonight that can make a conflict.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is that moment when you have it in your power to have some very happy moments and to put your finest ideas across but tonight avoid risky ventures.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



"It's normal to hear the refrigerator hum at night...but the theme to 'L.A. Law'?"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DISAT

JABON

GUTONE

INTOUG

Print answer here: IT'S

Yesterday's Jumbles: LUSTY TROTH HELIUM WAITER

Answer: How the former football player now does most of his kicking—WITH HIS MOUTH

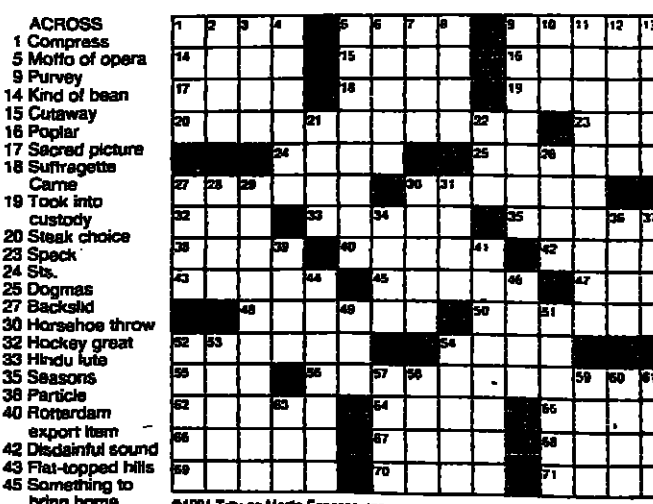
Don't know when to quit

THAT GAMBLER NEVER KNOWS WHERE HIS NEXT DOLLAR IS COMING FROM, BUT ALWAYS KNOWS WHERE—

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

THE Daily Crossword by Wilson McBeath



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

PAIPAS GAPE SEAN

ASIDE OMAR TARD

TWENTYFOUR ERRO

HAT TEAR ORION

SCANDAL TROINY

VALOR DUNE JUNA

IRAE MAMED ONES

SIDE EVEN VIDEO

FAIR TWIN PAN

WIND MOWAGE

ROBBY LAUD MAN

ENIG EAST JIMBO

ENDS ROAD FIER

51 "Gomer Pyle"

52 Position

53 Sharp end

54 Obuse or acute

57 Interstate exit

58 Ersatz butter

59 List abbr.

60 Singer James

61 Sued

63 Cognizant

كنا من الامل

Egypt to press ahead with economic reforms

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Sedki pledged Monday to press on with economic reforms to cut the government's budget deficit and foreign debts, and reassure the public that prices would stabilise.

In a televised two-hour policy speech, Mr. Sedki stressed the government's approach to economic reform would continue to be gradual. Subsidies on most basic foodstuffs and services for low income citizens would not be scrapped.

The government is sensitive to overnight economic reforms after bloody street riots erupted in January 1977 when it suddenly increased the price of bread. The late president Anwar Sadat had to scrap the increases.

"I would like to reassure you that most of the causes related to this problem (price increases) are linked to a transitional period when economic reform measures are being implemented," Mr. Sedki told parliament members.

The government hopes that prices will become stable at the

end of that stage," he added, without specifying how long the reform programme would continue.

He said inflation was running at between 17 and 18 per cent, compared to 25 per cent in the 1990/91 financial year which ended on June 30. He said he expected it to fall to 15 per cent by the end of the 1991/92 financial year and to seven per cent in 1992/93.

The government has gradually raised the prices of basic commodities like flour, rice, cooking oil, bottled butane gas, petrol and increased prices of bus and train transportation since early in 1990.

The reform programme, which has been worked out with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, will win Egypt the cancellation of about \$10 billion of its foreign debt and the rescheduling of \$10 billion more.

In May last year, the government slapped a 10 per cent sales tax on most goods and services, raised customs duties 30 per cent

and freed interest rates which rose sharply.

Mr. Sedki said economic reforms over the past year had brought good results and there would be more of the same.

He added that subsidies for foodstuffs and services for low income citizens would amount to 13.5 billion pounds (\$4 billion) in 1991/92.

The sales tax, public taxes and customs duties brought the government 14.3 billion pounds (\$4.3 billion) in 1990/91, three billion pounds (\$900 million) more than the previous year.

The government, trying to restrict its expenditure, would not borrow except in critical situations and to finance projects which would be able to pay back the loans.

Mr. Sedki said 1,673 projects once owned by local governments had been sold to the private sector and another 192 were being considered for sale or lease.

There would be fundamental changes in the management of the public sector, cutting red tape



Atef Sedki

and monitoring the efficiency of company board members.

Mr. Sedki said reactivating Egypt's stock exchange "was not an issue which could be put off" in the light of economic development and added the government was setting up a programme to reorganise it.

The government was also working on reducing bureaucracy to attract foreign and Arab investors and was encouraging young people to start small industrial and productive projects by providing them with loan facilities.

Iraq, anticipating release of funds, orders German goods

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq has ordered goods from German firms in the expectation that Bonn will go ahead and unblock Iraqi funds frozen since the invasion of Kuwait. Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh told Reuters Monday.

A German foreign ministry spokesman said this week Bonn was considering releasing the funds, which Iraq says amount to between \$100 and \$150 million, provided the money is used only for humanitarian purposes.

Mr. Saleh said the orders included spare parts for sanitation systems but gave no other details. Germany had not yet officially

notified the Iraqi government of its intentions, he added.

Finance Minister Majeed Abed Jaafar told reporters that he welcomed signs that Bonn would let Baghdad use the funds and that other countries should follow suit.

"We hope to see other countries take Germany as an example," he said. "Causing an entire people to starve is inhuman."

Baghdad says it wants access to billions of dollars of frozen funds to buy food and medicines. It says tens of thousands of children have died because of the U.N. sanctions.

So far only Switzerland and Britain have responded. Britain unfroze \$125 million in return for the release of a British businessman jailed on corruption charges.

Washington, which wants the U.N. sanctions against Iraq to stay in place until President Saddam Hussein is removed from power, holds about \$2 billion in funds.

Mr. Jaafar repeated Iraq's opposition to U.N. resolution 706, which would allow Baghdad to sell oil worth \$1.6 billion to buy food and medicine.

Iraq, which will negotiate changes to the proposal in Vienna

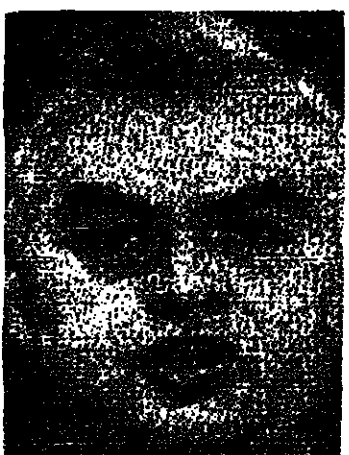
this month, rejects the current plan as inadequate, unworkable and an infringement of its sovereignty.

The ministers were speaking at the opening of a museum showing how Iraq has rebuilt communications facilities damaged in the Gulf war last year.

An information and culture ministry engineer told cabinet members how Iraqi engineers had repaired three 1,000-KW transmitters south of Baghdad in record time.

The transmitters were used to stop "hostile transmissions" entering Iraq, he added.

Lamont says British government will not panic on economy, sterling



Norman Lamont

LONDON (R) — British Chancellor of the Exchequer Norman Lamont refused Tuesday to be stamped into panic measures by gloom over the nation's recession-hit economy.

Mr. Lamont said in a keynote Financial Times interview that devaluing the pound sterling would be "fool's gold."

He was reacting to mounting criticism of the economic strategy of the Conservative government of Prime Minister John Major, who faces a test of his political mettle at the start of the 1992 general election year.

Mr. Major's problem is that a rebound from a recession has taken longer to arrive than predicted. He must hold the election by July yet unemployment is above 2.5 million and still rising.

A weekend opinion poll put the opposition Labour Party six points ahead — threatening a new speculative attack on the pound in foreign exchange markets on fears that a Labour government would be bad for business.

A rise in German interest rates had already lured hot money out of sterling. But to put up British base interest rates, now 10.5 per cent, to defend the pound's rate in the European Community currency grid would crimp the economy further.

While the Labour Party said

events had turned Mr. Major and Mr. Lamont "into liars" about the economy, the government returned to the Christmas break to reorganise its defences.

In television interviews throughout Monday, Treasury Economic Secretary John Maples spelt out a new political message, conceding that economic recovery was overdue but saying that Labour policies would only make things worse.

Mr. Lamont followed up with his newspaper interview ruling out the line of escape favoured by some Conservative legislators who fear losing their parliamentary seats in the election — realigning the EC exchange rate mechanism (ERM) so as to devalue the pound and open the way for new British interest rate cuts.

"That is fool's gold," he said. The embattled Conservatives now have to dig in and see whether speculators do attack the pound. In early currency trading Tuesday it actually edged higher

in value against the German mark.

Central bank intervention to buy the pound and support its value would be a first defence before Mr. Major considered the traumatic alternative of higher interest rates.

Political sources said Mr. Major planned a defiant new year message defending his inflation-busting economic policy and saying that 1992 would see "quite substantial" economic expansion.

Mr. Lamont said there would be no fiscal action to stimulate the economy before the annual budget in March. Tax measures "if there are any" would be taken then.

Some commentators, including the Independent newspaper, have suggested that a budget income tax cut could win Mr. Major votes.

Labour, which has pledged to raise welfare spending, has said that it would rescind any such "daft and desperate" cut.

Miyazawa indicates Japan should change rice policy

TOKYO (R) — Prime Minister Kichiro Miyazawa told a new year's news conference the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade talks must not fail, indicating Japan should eventually change its long-time policy of banning rice imports.

At the same time, Mr. Miyazawa said it was impossible to lift the ban immediately because of domestic political pressures.

"We must scrutinise everything to the limit so that the Uruguay Round will not fail," the 72-year-old premier told the news conference.

"I believe the (Japanese) people have gradually come to realise that we would be to blame if we do nothing on this," he pointed out.

Mr. Miyazawa said the latest proposal for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) calling for all non-tariff farm import barriers to be converted into tariffs was "a rational idea."

The proposal came in a final draft proposal by GATT Director-General Arthur Dunkel to end the five-year-old Uruguay

Round of talks.

At the moment it is politically impossible to revise the food control law, which bans rice imports, because the major opposition Socialist Democratic Party opposed opening the rice market, Mr. Miyazawa said.

"We must not make an empty promise," Mr. Miyazawa said.

Last week, members of Mr. Miyazawa's cabinet also said Japan had no plans to open up its rice market and said they would postpone a decision on the final GATT proposal until after the Jan. 15 deadline.

On a forthcoming visit by U.S. President George Bush, Mr. Miyazawa said he hoped to issue a "Tokyo declaration" which would outline the political partnership between Japan and the United States to help democracy, freedom and prosperity in the rest of the world.

Mr. Miyazawa said he was seeking cooperation from Japanese car and car parts makers to help expand sales of U.S.-made vehicles in Japan and jointly develop car parts with U.S. components makers.

Owners inject funds into France's Chaumet

PARIS (R) — French jeweller Chaumet, whose patrons have included Napoleon and Elizabeth Taylor, has received a cash injection from its owners to finance a major expansion in 1992, Chaumet has said.

Chaumet Chairman Charles Lefevre said Arabian Investment Banking Corporation (Investcorp), the holding company which owns Chaumet, provided 205 million francs (\$39.4 million) in new capital for the high-society jeweller last week.

"Investcorp has increased our capital to 291 million francs (\$56 million) so that we can launch new collections and products," Mr. Lefevre said.

Chaumet, located on Paris's elegant place Vendôme near the Ritz Hotel, has served royalty and aristocrats since the early 18th century.

Investcorp, a consortium of British, American and Gulf state investors, bought the firm from the Chaumet brothers in 1987 after the brothers filed for bankruptcy. The then family-run business was found to owe \$350 million.

Jacques and Pierre Chaumet were sentenced to jail last month for fraud, illegal banking practices and abuse of confidence in one of France's most colourful financial scandals.

A Paris court ruled they had illegally obtained collateral for jewels stored in their vaults and sold clients' jewellery for their own profit.

Morocco's King Hassan II was reported to have lost up to 192 million francs (\$37 million) and socialite Princess Minnie de Beaulieu-Craon saw her pearls, which she had confided to Chaumet for safe-keeping, on sale at an auction.

Mr. Lefevre said the scandal had not hurt Chaumet's sales, which were eight to nine per cent higher than last year.

"The end of the year has been very successful, in fact, fantastic, considering the economic situation," he said.

Mr. Lefevre said he expected expansion of the store's precious jewellery and designer collections to push sales up 40 per cent next year to 350 million francs (\$67 million).

Consumer confidence remains low in U.S.

NEW YORK (R) — U.S. consumer confidence remained at low, recessionary levels in December as Americans continued to fret about the state of the economy, according to a survey released Monday.

The Conference Board, a business research group, said consumer confidence was almost flat at 52.4 in December against a revised 52.7 per cent in November.

The numbers compare with a 1985 average of 100 and a 1991 peak of 81.1 in the euphoria after the Gulf war.

A separate survey by a group of Chicago-area purchasing managers showed a sharp slowdown in the industrial economy of that region.

The Conference Board said it found consumers were more pessimistic about the economy last month than in November, but expectations for the months ahead had grown slightly more optimistic.

That optimism was reflected in a boost in the housing market where sales of existing homes rose 5.4 per cent in November as buyers took advantage of lower interest rates, the National Association of Realtors said.

The real estate group said the seasonally adjusted annual rate of sales in November totalled 3.33 million units, compared with 3.16 million units in October.

The monthly increase was the largest since last February, when sales rose 9.7 per cent from January 1991, to a rate of 3.16 million units.

The Association said favourable financing sparked more entry-level home sales and that low interest rates are motivating first-time home buyers.

The Federal Reserve could cut interest rates again soon, following on the heels of the step it took last month that pushed a key rate to its lowest level in 27 years, economists said.

The interest rate cut has contributed to a year-end rally on Wall Street that continued Monday, pushing the Dow Jones industrial average to record levels.

The central bank, which sets U.S. monetary policy, could move again in part to head off

any attempt by Congress to shore up the political fortunes of its members at the expense of the nation's long-term economic health.

"The point is, as soon as Congress gets back they are going to try to legislate some package to help their chances of reelection — and second, the economy," said Sally Kleinman, senior vice president at Manufacturers Hanover.

Congress formally reconvenes on Jan. 3, but legislative sessions do not start in earnest until Jan. 22.

President George Bush, mindful of his own reelection prospects, will also offer a major growth package in his state of the union message, slated for Jan. 28.

Tax cuts are a favourite option in both the Republican and Democratic camps. But economists worry that lower taxes could over-stimulate the economy and create an inflationary monster with long-term consequences.

The chairman of the powerful U.S. House of Representatives Tax-Writing Committee said recently it was essential to work out a tax bill quickly to try to boost an economy that likely has slipped back into recession.

Democrat Dan Rostenkowski, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said on Cable News Network's "Evans and Novak" programme that the tax relief alone might not be enough to spur the economy back to growth.

"With the deficit as large as it is, I don't know whether we'll help or hurt the economy of this country, but I think that we've got to do something," Mr. Rostenkowski said in response to queries.

Mr. Rostenkowski agreed the economy was shrinking once more and noted he warned about the risk of such a renewed recession as early as last June.

Businessmen are "frustrated and, more, frightened about our situation economically," Mr. Rostenkowski said, adding he hoped to present a set of tax proposals to President George Bush relatively soon after Congress returns to work early this year.

Russian economic reform chiefs dismiss unrest fears

MOSCOW (R) — Senior Russian officials Monday dismissed predictions that there would be disturbances when prices are liberalised this week and said fast privatisation of state property would ease consumers' discontent.

"The situation on the eve of profound economic reform gives no ground to suggest a possibility of a major social explosion linked to the liberalisation of prices," First Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, the main architect of the ambitious Russian reform plan, told a news conference.

"Leading sociologists say society is ready (for the freeing of prices) and, in all probability, will accept it as unavoidable," he said.

"The privatisation programme is the most effective means of lowering the level of social tension in the country," Vladimir Shumeiko, deputy head of the Russian Parliament said.

President Boris Yeltsin told Russian consumers Sunday in a new year broadcast that the price rises were painful but unavoidable. He promised they would be followed by quick action to privatise state property and introduce the right to buy and sell land.

Critics such as Mr. Yeltsin's Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi argue that the Russian leader is steering the country to chaos by liberalising prices before widespread privatisation. Without competition between firms, prices could soar widely.

Many reformers, including former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, say riot are possible this winter if price surges after being freed while shops remain empty.

Mr. Yeltsin, elected president last June, said the main achievement of his administration so far was keeping peace in the Russian Republic, whose economy was in complete disarray and which was going through the most dramatic period this century.

"We have managed to maintain the peaceful character of the country's development, to preserve civic peace. We have avoided the Yugoslav variant though to be frank, the situation in this country is not easier, but even harder," he pointed out.

Mr. Yeltsin announced all subsidies to state and collective farms would be ended and private farmers would get help with fertilisers and technology.

Most of the collective farms are unprofitable and Mr. Yeltsin's decision to end subsidies "will effectively abolish them, giving way to private farmers who will be free to swap or mortgage their land and on retirement sell it, or pass it on to their heirs."

Collective and state farms provide any worker submitting an application with his or her share of the farm's land within a month. "I think the time has come to fully recognise private ownership of land, including the right to buy and sell it," he said, signifying the most radical change in Russian agricultural policy since the abolition of serfdom in 1861.



Jacob Frenkel

on government tensions and resign in a bid to force election ahead of their scheduled date next November.

He could advance the election date if he feels sufficiently strong to defeat rivals both in and out of his rightist Likud Party and also perhaps to delay the concession expected from the U.S.-backed peace talks.

JORDAN TIMES
TEL: 667171

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.8690/8700	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1560/65	Canadian dollar
	1.5170/80	Deutsche marks
	1.7100/10	Dutch guilders
	1.3540/50	Swiss francs
	31.25/28	Belgian francs
	5.1775/1828	French francs
	1149/1150	Italian lire
	124.85/85	Japanese yen
	5.5475/5575	Swedish crowns
	5.9760/9860	Norwegian crowns
	5.9150/9250	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	333.35/35.85	U.S. dollars

Cinema Tel: 677420

CONCORD

Kamal Shinnawi, Farouq Fishawi & Najwa Fuad in

DR. MANAL DANCES

(Arabic)

Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore in

GHOST

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Special shows for children on Thursday and Friday at 11:30 a.m.

A BOOK OF HEROES

Tel: 675571

Nabli Al Mashini Theatre

On Thursday Jan. 2 at 8 p.m.

The stars of Haret Abu Awwad family will resume their performances of

Zaman Al Shakhlabeh

"Somersault Time"

Tickets available daily at the theatre's entrance.

Cinema Tel: 625155

RAINBOW

TERMINATOR "2"

JUDGEMENT DAY

Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Former Soviet republics split over single armed force

MINSK, Byelorussia (R) — A sharp split has opened among former Soviet republics over whether their new Commonwealth of Independent States should have a unified conventional armed force or not.

More than eight hours of tough negotiations in the Byelorussian capital Minsk served to emphasise the differences between the grouping's integrationist and isolationist wings.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin told reporters that Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova wanted to form their own armed forces, limiting joint controls to nuclear weapons.

The other eight would maintain a united armed force.

"As far as conventional armed forces are concerned, we confirmed the right of each state to decide this in accordance with its own laws," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, who remains acting commander-in-chief, told Interfax News Agency the 11 leaders would tackle the question again in two months.

Control of the former Soviet Union's 30,000-odd nuclear

weapons, the burning issue for the West, caused fewer problems.

Mr. Yeltsin, who took over the "nuclear button" from former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, has authority to fire them in consultation with leaders of the other republics where the weapons are deployed — Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Byelorussia.

A mechanism for this would be worked out, he said.

The 11 leaders agreed on pursuing space research jointly, dividing up the former Soviet Union's property abroad and distributing Western aid.

But arguments over economic reform, especially Russia's go-it-alone approach in unilaterally freeing most prices from Thursday, provoked fierce debates, local agency reports said.

"It will not be easy in the commonwealth," Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev told the Russian Information Agency. "But then it was terribly hard in the union, so it is somehow easier here."

"After 74 years (of Communist rule) there are many problems and time is needed to resolve

them," Mr. Yeltsin commented during a break in the talks.

For Western nations, fearful of another Yugoslav civil war on a larger scale, the military question dwarfs all others.

Ukraine, ruled from Moscow for centuries, is among the most nationalist of the 11 and most able to "go it alone."

It was Ukraine's overwhelming vote for independence on Dec. 1 which persuaded Mr. Yeltsin to abandon the Soviet Union.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has missed no opportunity to publicly stress Ukraine's absolute independence.

The Kiev government has sworn nuclear weapons but insists any joint army would keep it tied to Russia.

Azerbaijan wants a free hand for its bloody territorial dispute with Armenia, while largely Romanian Moldova wants some form of integration with Romania.

In Brussels, the European Community said Tuesday that it was recognising the Ukraine and seven other former Soviet republics.

In a statement the 12 EC gov-

ernments welcomed assurances from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Byelorussia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan that they would meet guidelines laid down by the Community.

The EC has already recognised Russia.

In Tbilisi, Georgia rebels said Tuesday they were awaiting reinforcements to help them topple President Zviad Gamsakhurdia over the New Year holiday.

But leading opposition politicians saw little prospect of a quick victory and warned of a spread in fighting that has killed over 30 people and wounded hundreds.

Clashes flared in central Tbilisi Monday after the collapse of a weekend ceasefire between rebels and presidential forces, and a senior rebel commander said he was preparing to storm the republic's parliament.

Both sides Tuesday held their positions around the Transcaucasian republic's parliament where Mr. Gamsakhurdia and several hundred well-armed supporters have been holed up for the past 10 days under a barrage of missile and sniper fire.

Vance blames both Serbs, Croats for violence

BELGRADE (R) — United Nations special envoy Cyrus Vance, starting a new peace mission to Yugoslavia, made a fresh appeal to Serbian and federal leaders Tuesday to play their part in ending the conflict in breakaway Croatia.

But the sound of gunfire echoing across Croatia as it headed into the New Year threatened to drown out any new ideas that could bring a breakthrough in the conflict.

In two hours of talks with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, Mr. Vance expressed dismay at the upsurge in fighting that preceded his visit — but he was careful to steer a neutral line on the question of blame.

"It seems both sides are violating the ceasefire," Mr. Vance told reporters after his meeting with Mr. Milosevic.

It was not immediately clear if Mr. Vance — on his fifth peacekeeping mission to end the conflict engulfing the Balkan state — had put forward any fresh political proposals on Yugoslavia's future.

Tanjug News Agency said earlier he was carrying a proposal for a three-tier solution, with Serbia and Montenegro as the core of a Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia in confederation with them, and Croatia and Slovenia in loose association with them all.

But Mr. Vance made no mention of this reported plan. He continued to rule out any deployment of U.N. peacekeeping troops in Yugoslavia until a solid ceasefire was in place.

"I have said many, many times that until we have a durable ceasefire we can not go forward with a peacekeeping operation and that is not happening."

"Indeed the fighting even seems worse than the last time I was here," Mr. Vance added. He later held separate talks with Federal Defence Minister Veljko Kadijevic.

The war, pitting Croats seeking independence against Croatia's Serb minority and the Serb-led federal army, is inextricably linked to the political problem of the future Balkan state.

Each side says it wants the U.N.'s "blue helmets" to intervene. But 14 previous ceasefires have collapsed and both sides seem more concerned to grab what territorial advantage they can rather than end the six months of conflict which have cost an estimated 6,000 lives.

Mr. Vance, beginning his new week-long mission as Boutros Ghali prepares to take over as U.N. chief, was due to see other key players in the Yugoslav drama including Croatia's Franjo Tudjman.

Mr. Vance told reporters Monday night shortly after arriving that he intended to ask the warring parties why fighting had intensified targets across Croatia and artillery attacks were reported in the west and the centre.

"I am saddened that the situation in terms of fighting on the ground continues badly... I want to find out why," Mr. Vance said.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Cold wave claims 70 lives in Bangladesh

DHAKA (AP) — A cold wave gripping Bangladesh killed 18 people, raising the death toll 70 in the last week, newspapers reported Tuesday. Temperatures fell to 6 degrees C (43 F) about 4 degrees (7 F) below normal, hitting millions of poor who lack war clothing. The independent English daily Bangladesh Observer said most of the victims were children, elderly people and day labourers who have no proper nighttime shelter. The latest deaths were reported from Dinajpur in northern Bangladesh and the western districts of Sirajganj and Pabna. A senior official at the Relief Ministry said Prime Minister Khaleda Zia distributed several thousands blankets among Dhaka's poor over the weekend and had ordered the emergency distribution of warm clothes and blankets in northern districts.

China to sell nuclear plant to Pakistan

PEKING (R) — China will export a 300 megawatt nuclear power station to Pakistan, and both sides vowed it would be dedicated to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the official New China News Agency said Tuesday. The agreement was signed in Peking between the head of the state China National Nuclear Corporation and the chairman of Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission. Premier Li Peng told the Pakistani delegation that China had this month decided to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which sets guidelines for controlling the export of nuclear technology, the agency said. "Li said that the two sides have agreed that the project will be secured by the International Atomic Energy Agency," it said. "It is totally for peaceful purposes," Mr. Li was quoted as saying. China's export of nuclear technology has raised fears in the West that Peking may be helping other countries, such as Pakistan, Iran and Algeria, to develop nuclear weapons. China has acknowledged nuclear cooperation with many countries, but has repeatedly denied it has promoted atomic weapons programmes.

Gas kills 30 in Mexican church

MEXICO CITY (R) — Fumes from a gas lamp killed 30 people, including 17 children, in a Pentecostal Church in northern Mexico, authorities said Tuesday. The victims were discovered shortly before noon Monday sprawled across the floor of the tiny Mount of Olives Church in the northern state of San Luis Potosi, they said. All were believed to have died Sunday night of toxic fumes from a butane gas lantern used for an annual ceremony in the church, which is just 4.5 metres wide by nine metres (30 feet) long, Claudio Garcia of the San Luis Potosi state government said. "They all died from a lack of oxygen to the brain, including a child of less than six months," Garcia said in a telephone interview.

Rivers flood homes near Houston

MISSOURI CITY, Texas (AP) — The Trinity and Brazos rivers flooded homes to either side of Houston Tuesday, their rising waters carrying snakes and fire ants. Forecasters warned that caskets might start popping out of the ground. The two-rain-swollen rivers had flooded almost 80 homes by Monday, and residents of more than 180 other homes braced for a dismal New Year as the murky water climbed to some of the highest levels in two decades. "I live in that brown house that's swimming down there," Denise Nelson, 16, said Monday, pointing to a two-story home. "Yesterday we lost the piano. Today we lost everything else that was there — dressers, China cabinets." The high water was caused by day of heavy rain that began 200 miles (320 kilometres) to the north the week before Christmas. Flood waters have swamped farmland, drowned livestock and caused millions in damage. They have also been blamed for at least 15 deaths across the state, all in the first week. If the flooding itself wasn't enough of a problem, residents spotted snakes and fire ants in the water and saw more snakes hanging from trees.

Mother Teresa in serious condition

LA JOLLA, California (R) — Mother Teresa, who inspired the world with her work for the homeless of India and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, was in serious condition Monday after heart surgery. "Mother Teresa is seriously ill but making progress," said Sue Pondrom, a spokeswoman for Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation in La Jolla. Mother Teresa, 81, is also suffering from bacterial pneumonia, she added. Her mission in Calcutta said she was completely out of danger. "She is conscious, resting and talking," said a spokeswoman for the Missionaries of Charity Order that Mother Teresa founded in the city in 1949. Mother Teresa was admitted to hospital on Dec. 26 after falling ill in Tijuana, Mexico, where she and other members of the Missionaries of Charity were ending a worldwide tour of prayer. The Roman Catholic nun set up her mission to help millions of poor, unwanted people all over the world with a simple message: "The poor must know that we love them."

Taiwan's elderly lawmakers retire

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Eight-two elderly lawmakers who have not faced an election since taking office in China 44 years ago retired Tuesday, clearing the way for Taiwan's freely elected legislature to take office. The gray-haired deputies had remained in parliament to bolster the governing Nationalist Party's claim to be the rightful ruler of a united China after it fled Communist forces on the mainland in 1949. The retiring deputies had been targets of pro-democracy protests since the Nationalists lifted 38 years of martial law in 1987. At their last session of the Legislative Yuan Saturday, they received emotional hugs from their younger, Taiwan-elected colleagues. "We have completed our historical mission," parliament Speaker Liang Su-Yung said in a farewell speech. "Parliamentary reforms were done and a new era has arrived." The retiring lawmakers were the last Legislative Yuan members who fled to Taiwan with Nationalists after World War II. Gen. Chiang Kai-Shek in 1949. The Nationalists never returned to the mainland, and the aging legislators stayed on until many either died or retired.

Swedish bomb threats disrupt rail

STOCKHOLM (R) — Swedish police said Tuesday a wave of bomb threats touched off a nationwide search after a bomb was found and detonated in Stockholm's Central Railway Station Monday. But no other devices were discovered after a mystery series of bomb calls raised security fears at major transport terminals, disrupting air and rail holiday traffic. A police technician was slightly injured in a controlled explosion of the station bomb which smashed several windows in the building Monday. Police detonated the bomb after getting a warning from an unidentified telephone caller. After the all-clear, the station was evacuated late Monday for a second time when police found an abandoned suitcase containing a dummy hand grenade. Several airports and railway stations around the country were evacuated late Monday as police with dogs searched for bombs after receiving up to a dozen separate bomb threats.

Hong Kong governor to step down

HONG KONG (AP) — Sir David Wilson, the China scholar turned bureaucrat who steered Hong Kong through one of the most tumultuous periods of its 150-year colonial history, will step down from his post as the territory's governor next year. The announcement by the British government Tuesday brought criticism from politicians and businessmen because it could make Wilson, already criticised as a "lame duck" leader, even less powerful in his last months in office. "Now Hong Kong will be like a rudderless ship," said Emily Lau, a member of the Territory's Legislature. "Britain didn't take Hong Kong's interests to heart." Sir David, whose nose and ostrich-plumed pith hat made him popular with cartoonists, is not expected to leave office until elections are held in Britain — no later than July. He will become a baron and be given a lifetime seat in Britain's House of Lords. Sir David's successor is expected to be the territory's last British governor.

COLUMN

Singapore bans chewing gum

SINGAPORE (R) — Singapore, which prides itself on its clean image, has banned chewing gum. "Littering by chewing gum has been a perennial nuisance which causes filthiness to our public facilities and estates," the Environment Ministry said in a statement. "The government has therefore decided to ban the import, sale and manufacture of chewing gum from Jan. 3, 1992." It said in some instances chewing gum had prevented commuter train doors from closing, disrupting services and inconveniencing passengers.

1st prize in U.K. Christmas draw is free divorce

LONDON (R) — British lawyer John Mallison offered a free divorce as first prize in his rugby club's Christmas draw. But winners Brian and Pamela Davey, who have been happily married for nearly 30 years, didn't need it. "We've sold it to the highest bidder," said Brian Davey, 56, at the family home in Cumbria, northern England. "There's quite a big market for a prize like this at this time of year."

Special New Year offer a sober night at home

KARACHI (R) — Pakistan's luxury hotels are advertising a special offer for would-be partygoers on New Year's Eve — a silent and sober night at home. The hotels placed newspaper advertisements Monday saying they would host no festivities. "Our restaurants are open until 9:30 p.m. on Dec. 31, 1991," one luxury hotel warned late-night revellers. Police said the fundamentalists had been making telephone calls to hotels for the past three days, threatening violent protests against any New Year revelry. The fundamentalists say New Year parties encourage Muslims to break their religion's ban on drinking liquor.

Concert hall issues free sweets to counter coughing

AMSTERDAM (R) — In a bid to cut down audience coughing during classical music performances, the elegant Amsterdam Concert House has decided to offer concertgoers free throat sweets. The move follows a poster campaign to remind coughers of the disturbance they can cause to fellow concertgoers and musicians, the Dutch News Agency (ANP) said.

Scientists promise moth-repellent wool

SYDNEY (R) — Australian sheep may soon be growing wool that repels insects even before the fleece leaves the animal, researchers said. Laboratory sheep have been genetically modified by scientists at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to make them produce insect repellents in their wool follicles. "By using genetic engineering... the animals can be induced to secrete a substance repellent to insects," said geneticist Oliver Mayo of the CSIRO's Animal Production Division. Biologist Terry Leche said the process would make clothing produced from the fleece naturally moth-repellent. Australia is the world's largest producer of wool and has about 165 million sheep. One of the most prevalent diseases in sheep — "fly-strike" — costs its farmers an estimated 200 million dollars (\$152 million) a year. Dr. Mayo said that if trials on the experimental sheep succeed, wool will become naturally moth-proof and farmers will not need to use toxic chemicals to protect sheep against insect-borne diseases, nor will fleece have to be treated against moths after shearing.

Singapore woman fined for scalding cat to death

SINGAPORE (R) — A Singapore court has fined an office secretary 450 Singapore dollars (\$270) for scalding a cat which she said was a nuisance, court officials said Saturday. Tan Gher Choo, 43, pleaded guilty to trapping the cat and pouring hot water on the three-year-old animal in June 1990 to stop it from disturbing her. The cat, belonging to a neighbour, died from the injury.

2 Koreas reach accord on nuclear dispute

SEOUL (R) — The two Koreas Tuesday clinched a draft agreement on a pact banning nuclear weapons from the divided peninsula, a major step toward ending a long dispute over the North's suspected nuclear development programme.

After eight hours of working-level talks at Panmunjom, a town straddling the tense border, a South Korean spokesman said delegates initiated a five-point joint declaration to make the peninsula, the cold war's last frontier, nuclear free.

"The accord will help establish permanent peace and stability in the peninsula and pave the way for new relations of cooperation between the South and North," he said.

Analysts said the North, isolated by the disintegration of the Communist Bloc and with its economy faltering badly, was eager for peace to move toward re-orientation.

"Because of the rapidly changing international situation, the North had to be more flexible," a government analyst said.

Under the agreement, neither country should manufacture, possess, deploy or use nuclear weapons.

The two agreed to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes and to submit their facilities to mutual inspection to verify the absence of nuclear weapons.

The agreement provides for a joint nuclear control committee to be established within one month of the nuclear-free accord coming into effect, officials said.

The committee will discuss details of inspecting nuclear facilities in the North and South to verify the absence of nuclear weapons.

The United States, Japan and South Korea say North Korea is within a year or so of being able to build a nuclear bomb.

Tuesday's breakthrough came after both Seoul and Pyongyang made concessions, government officials said.

The South agreed to drop a clause requiring North Korea to pledge to sign a nuclear safeguards accord and allow inspection of its nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The North has said the signing of a matter between Pyongyang and the IAEA and Seoul should of interest.

"But I understand the agreement was reached after the North gain verbally assured us today that it will sign and carry out the safeguards accord at an early date," a government spokesman said.

Washington and Seoul have had inspections by the IAEA could be the important step toward convincing them of North Korea's assertion that it is not developing nuclear weapons.

The North dropped its insistence that the accord include a clause committing both sides not to hold military exercises simulating a nuclear war, another previous sticking point.

South Korea insists its annual military exercises, Team Spirit, held jointly with the United States, are defensive and do not include a nuclear attack. Pyongyang describes them as a rehearsal for invasion of the North.

Karabakh seeks U.N. help

LONDON (R) — The parliamentary leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh, claimed by both Armenia and Azerbaijan, has made an urgent appeal for help to the United Nations to stop attacks by Azeri forces, Moscow Radio said Tuesday.

The parliamentary leadership of the mainly Armenian enclave has also called for help from other international organisations, the radio, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), said.

"The Executive Committee of the Nagorno-Karabakh republican parliament has sent an urgent request to the United Nations, the European Community, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Air Marshal (Yevgeny) Shaposhnikov, commander-in-chief of the CIS armed forces, to help stop military actions by Azeri army units against the Armenian people," the radio said.

"The appeal says that the Armenian population of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic hopes that the world community will do everything possible to save them from extermination," it said.

Armenia reported fierce fighting Monday between Azeri forces and Armenian irregulars in Nagorno-Karabakh, now abandoned by peacekeeping forces of the former Soviet Union.

Soviet television said 15 people

had been killed in clashes Sunday in the territory, but gave no details.

TASS News Agency quoted a local official as saying an Azeri tank column shelled the territory's main town Stepanakert Monday, killing and wounding unspecified numbers of people.

About 1,000 people have been killed in four years in fighting over the enclave, mainly inhabited by Armenians but allotted to Azerbaijan by Moscow in 1923.

An Armenian Interior Ministry spokesman said Azeri forces were attacking the village of Karachinar, 15 kilometres from Stepanakert, and being repelled by the defenders.

The Azeris had recaptured Kirkidzhan, an Azeri suburb of Stepanakert, Monday from the Armenian guerrillas who took it Sunday, he said.

"They (the Armenians) are prepared to fight to the end," the spokesman, speaking by telephone from Yerevan, said.

Moscow television showed film of damage caused by shelling in Stepanakert.

The republic's President Ayaz Mutalibov told a news conference in Byelorussia he was prepared to resume peace talks with Armenia.

Moscow Television said Mr. Mutalibov had quashed an attempt to debate Nagorno-Karabakh at the summit, saying it was an internal Azeri affair.

Bush arrives in Australia

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — President George Bush and Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating had grounds for commiseration in their first presidential-level meeting Tuesday with both facing economic problems and perilous roads to re-election.

Beyond that, the two leaders also will face some tensions during Mr. Bush's three days in Australia — principally over trade and agricultural issues.

A bleary-eyed Bush got a low-key welcome at Sydney Airport after a 20-hour flight from Washington.

The two wore broad smiles as they posed together. Except for a chance to view a New Year's fireworks display over the Sydney Harbour as his motorcade sped downtown, the first thing on Mr. Bush's agenda was private time to sleep and adjust to the time change. The first formal Bush-Keating meeting was scheduled more than 14 hours after Mr. Bush's arrival.

On the way downtown in his motorcade, one family held up a large American flag. The streets were sparsely lined, due partly to daylong rains.

117 die in Vietnam gales

HANOI (R) — At least 117 people were killed and hundreds were missing after gale-force winds lashed Vietnam's central coast at the weekend, officials said Tuesday.

The winds, gusting from north to south at up to 70 kph (44 mph), struck coastal districts of Quang Nam-Da Nang and neighbouring Quang Ngai provinces Saturday morning.

Most of those killed were fishermen, drowned when their boats capsized, or people living in houses near the sea, officials said.

In Binh Son district of northern Quang Ngai, the winds killed at least 79 people, injured 400, and left 293 missing, a Red Cross official in Hanoi said, quoting reports from the scene.

The winds killed 38 people, badly injured five and left 24 missing in Nui Thanh district of Quang Nam-Da Nang, said Hoang Lien, head of the Red Cross office in the provincial capital Da Nang.

The winds sank 77 fishing boats and badly damaged 162, he said. The Hanoi official said 29 boats were damaged and 65 were missing in Binh Son, where 400 houses were damaged.

Lien said his office was working with local authorities to help those affected by the disaster.

"But our ability is limited so we have had to call for help from Hanoi," he said.

The loss of life and injuries were the worst in his province since April 1989, when a similar storm caused tens of millions of dollars of damage, he said.

Every year devastating tropical storms strike coastal Vietnam causing heavy loss of life, destroying thousands of homes and laying waste vast areas of cropland.

At least 10 people were reported missing and feared dead in the province of Thua Thien Hue adjoining Quang Nam-Da Nang

U.S. told to leave Philippine base in a year

MANILA (Agencies) — The Philippines Tuesday formally told the United States to leave Subic Naval Base within a year, signalling the closure of the oldest and largest American naval installation in Asia.

The Foreign Office served the U.S. embassy official notice asking Washington to withdraw all American forces from the base by Dec. 31, 1992.

The withdrawal of the 6,000 American servicemen from Subic, 80 kilometres northwest of Manila, would end nearly a century of U.S. military presence in the former colony and close a stormy and sometimes bloody chapter in relations between the two countries.

"The government of the Philippines hereby notifies the government of the United States that the... Philippine-United States military bases agreement... shall terminate on Dec. 31, 1992," the notice said.

"Accordingly, the withdrawal of all U.S. military forces from Subic Naval Base should be completed by said date."

For decades, the presence of U.S. troops has been the object of frequent, sometimes violent, attacks by Filipino nationalist and leftist groups that viewed the bases as an affront to national sovereignty.

At least 10 Americans, including a U.S. army colonel, have been killed since 1987 in ambushes in and around Manila

by leftist guerrillas demanding the removal of U.S. forces.

Violent street demonstrations in the 1970s against the bases were among factors that forced then President Ferdinand Marcos to proclaim martial law.

Subic, the last U.S. military base in the Philippines, services the Seventh Fleet. It is the largest ship repair yard in Asia and a major ammunition and supply depot that helps the United States patrol trade routes between the Middle East and East Asia.

Earlier this year, the United States handed back to the Philippines five other facilities, including the giant Clark Air Base, which U.S. forces abandoned in June after it was wrecked by the eruption of Mount Pinatubo volcano.

U.S. military forces have been in the Philippines since 1898, when the United States seized the islands from Spain. Washington granted Filipinos independence in 1946.

The loss of the bases poses an array of problems for the government of President Corason Aquino, including how to find jobs for almost 70,000 Filipinos employed at Clark and Subic.

The bases annually pumped more than \$1 billion into the economy.

In its termination notice, the Philippines cited an agreement between the two countries that they would take steps "to mini-

mize any disruptive effects" of the closure.

Manila originally planned to transform Clark into an aviation complex and Subic into a commercial ship repair yard servicing foreign vessels, including possibly U.S. Navy ships.

Meanwhile, the Philippines' most influential cleric has urged President Aquino not to endorse former Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos for president, Manila newspapers reported Tuesday.

Several newspapers, including the Daily Globe, Malaya and the Manila Chronicle, quoted an unnamed presidential staffer as saying Cardinal Jaime Sin suggested that it would be better not to endorse any candidate than to appoint to Gen. Ramos as her successor.

Efforts to contact presidential or church officials for comment were unsuccessful because Tuesday is a holiday and most offices are closed.

The newspapers quoted a church spokesman as confirming that Mrs. Aquino attended a reception last Friday at the cardinal's residence.

Mrs. Aquino is expected to announce her endorsement next month in advance of the May 11 national elections. She has ruled out a second term.

Gen. Ramos is a Protestant in a largely Roman Catholic nation. The unnamed official was quoted as saying Cardinal Sin raised unspecified objections to Gen.

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